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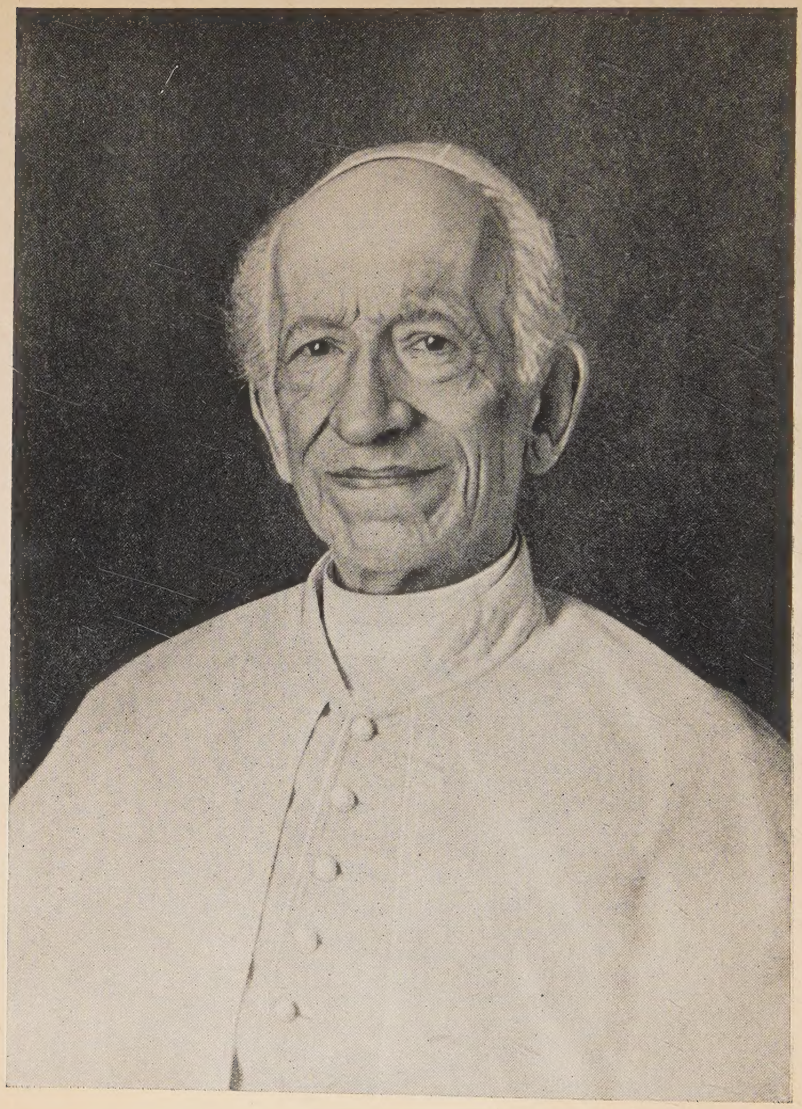

POPE LEO XIII

THE

APPARITIONS AND SHRINES

OF

HEAVEN'S BRIGHT QUEEN

In Legend, Poetry and History

FROM THE EARLIEST AGES
TO THE PRESENT TIME

Compiled from Approved Catholic Publications

BY

WILLIAM J. WALSH

WITH INTRODUCTION BY

MONSIGNOR BERNARD O'REILLY, D.D.

ILLUSTRATED

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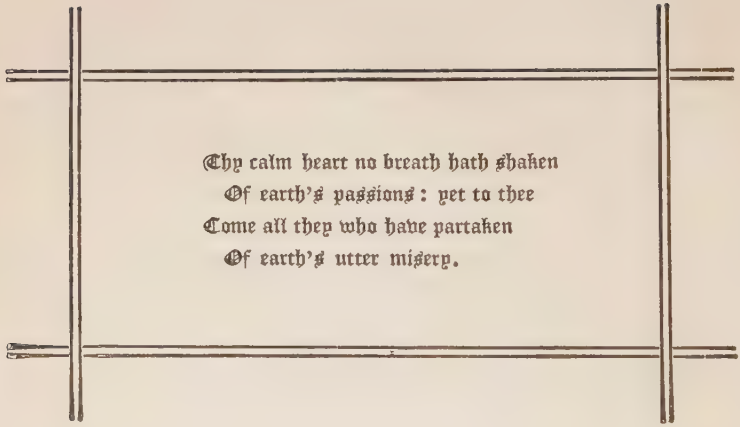
Thy calm heart no breath hath shaken
Of earth's passions: yet to thee
Come all they who have partaken
Of earth's utter misery.

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Dear Mother, Queen of Saints above,
Forever show to us thy love;
E'er guard and guide us here below,—
On us thy Queenly gifts bestow.

POPE LEO XIII. AND THE ROSARY

IT is fitting that there should be recorded the acts of the Holy Father concerning the Rosary. On the 1st of September, 1883, he issued the Encyclical Letter *Supremi Apostolatus Officio,* in which the devotion of the Rosary was earnestly put forward as the great means of prayer against present evils, and its recitation during the month of October enjoined. This may be called the formal institution of Rosary Month. On the 20th of November of the same year he addressed Letters Apostolic to the Father-General of the Dominican Order, praising the effect of his Encyclical in the Rosary devotions during October, and declaring that the petition of inserting "Queen of the Most Holy Rosary" in the Litany should be considered. On the 10th of December a Decree was issued ordering the insertion of this title in the Litany of Loreto. On the 24th of December a Brief was published repeating the same order, and expressing the desire of His Holiness that the Rosary should be recited daily in cathedral churches throughout the world, and in parish churches on Sundays and feast-days. On the 30th of August, 1884, the Holy Father issued another Encyclical (*Superiore anno*), in which, after expressing his great joy at the celebration of the Month of the Holy Rosary, he commanded the same for the ensuing month of October. In the year 1885 he established the Rosary Month, to be continued until the peace and liberty of the Church be restored. On the 11th of September, 1887, the Festival of the Most Holy Rosary was raised to a double of the second class. And now we have a papal document again declaring the importance of the prayers to Our Blessed Mother, and the value of their constant recitation, and assigning a Proper Mass and Office for the Feast of the Holy Rosary.

"In thanksgiving for benefits received, and in more earnest prayer for future favors, the Holy Father commands and em-

phatically repeats all that he has laid down in Encyclicals in former years and in Decrees of the Sacred Congregation of Rites with regard to the recitation of the Holy Rosary, particularly in the month of October. And having in times past made many efforts toward the increase of liturgical devotion to the Blessed Virgin under the invocation of the Rosary, wishing to make another addition to this object, he has instituted for the feast of the Solemnity of the Rosary, on the first Sunday of October, a Proper Office and Mass, to be recited in future by the clergy, regular and secular, according to the rules which by his approval and design he has ordered to be issued by the Sacred Congregation of Rites."

Among the numerous praises of the Rosary scattered through these pontifical documents, these will be remembered and quoted in time to come: "May the Christian nations cling more and more to the practice of the Rosary, to which our ancestors had recourse as an ever-ready refuge in misfortune, and as a glorious pledge and proof of Christian faith and devotion. We have desired, and desire nothing more ardently, than that the fervor of the faithful in performing the devotion of the Rosary should not languish, but should remain firm; the Holy Father desiring to increase the devotion toward the Mother of God, especially by this form of prayer most pleasing to Her. Amongst the various forms of prayer used in the Church piously and well, the Rosary has many titles of praise —especially this, that it was instituted to implore the help of the Mother of God against the enemies of the Faith; and, as all know, it has frequently consoled the Church in trial. Not only, therefore, is it proper for private prayer, but also for public occasions. This form of prayer should be restored to the honor it long held, when every Christian family marked each day with its recital. Hence we exhort and beseech all to say the Rosary every day with constancy. Care must be taken that, in these sad times for the Church, the holy custom of saying the Rosary be carefully observed, especially as this form of prayer is excellently suited to nourish the spirit of devotion."

APPARITION

TO

ST. FELIX OF VALOIS, F. TRINITARIANS, CERFROI, FRANCE

1212

Slavery triumphed till a vision mild
Beamed in beauty under Peter's dome,
Bright vision of the Virgin and her Child
Beneath the Standard of great Christian Rome.
Thomas J. McGeoghegan.

THE surname of Valois was given to this saint, according to some, because he was of the royal branch of Valois in France; but according to Joffred, Baillet, and many others, because he was of the province of Valois. The Saint was born in 1127, and when grown up renounced his estate, which was very considerable, and retired into a great wood, in the diocese of Meaux, called Cerfroi. Here, sequestered from the world, and forgetting its shadows and appearances which grossly impose upon its deluded votaries, he enjoyed himself and God, and studied to purify, reform, and govern his own heart, and to live only to his Creator. In the calm and serenity of this silent retreat, letting others amuse themselves with the airy bubbles of ambition, and enjoy the cheats of fancy, and the flatteries of sense, he abandoned himself to the heavenly delights of holy contemplation (which raised his soul above all created things) and to the greatest rigors of penance which were known only to God, but which fervor, love and compunction rendered sweeter to him than the joys of theatres. The devout hermit, had no thoughts

but of dying in the obscurity of this silent retreat, when Divine Providence called him thence to make him a great instrument of advancing his honor amongst men.

St. John of Matha, a young nobleman, a native of Provence, and doctor of divinity, who was lately ordained priest, having heard much of the wonderful sanctity of the holy hermit of Cerfroi, sought him out in his desert, and put himself under his direction. Felix soon perceived that his new guest was no novice in the exercises of a spiritual life; and it is not to be expressed with what fervor the two servants of God applied themselves to the practice of all virtues. Their fasts and watchings exceeded the strength of those who have not inured themselves by long habits to such extraordinary austerities: prayer and contemplation were their ordinary employment, and all their conversation tended to inflame each other to the most ardent love of God. After some time St. John proposed to the other a project of establishing a religious Order for the redemption of captives, a design with which he was inspired when he said his first Mass. Felix, though seventy years of age, readily offered himself to do and suffer whatever it should please God in the execution of so charitable a design. They agreed to consult heaven by redoubling their fasts and prayers for three days: after which term they resolved to beg the approbation of the Holy See, and made an austere pilgrimage together to Rome, in the depth of winter, and arrived there in January, 1198. Innocent III., who was lately installed in St. Peter's chair, having read the strong letters of recommendation which the bishop of Paris sent him in their favor, received them as if they had been two angels sent by God, and lodged them in his own palace. After many audiences, and several deliberations with his cardinals and prelates, having consulted God by prayer and fasting, his holiness was persuaded the two hermits were moved by the Holy Ghost, and gave a solemn approbation of a new religious institute which he would have called of the Holy Trinity, and of which he appointed Saint John of Matha the superior-general. Eudo of Sully, bishop of Paris, and the abbot of St. Victor, were com-

missioned by him to draw up a rule or constitutions, which they had already projected: and they were confirmed by his holiness on the seventeenth of December following. The holy founders who had taken a second journey to Rome to present their rule to the Pope, returned into France with its confirmation, and were everywhere received with applause and benedictions. King Philip Augustus authorized the establishment of their Order in France, and promoted it by his liberalities. Margaret of Blois gave them twenty acres of the wood where their hermitage was situate, with other benefactions; and they built the monastery of Cerfroi, which is the mother and chief house of the Order, about a mile from their old cells.* This Order within the space of forty years was so much increased as to be possessed of six hundred monasteries. St. John being obliged to go to Rome to settle his institute there in the church of St. Thomas *della Navicella,* upon Mount Cælius, the direction of the new convents which were erected in France, was left to St. Felix, who, amongst other houses, founded one at Paris, in the church of Saint Maturinus, though the house was afterward rebuilt more spacious by Robert Gaguin, the learned and famous general of this Order, who died in 1501. St. John, after two voyages to Barbary, spent the two last years of his life at Rome, where he died on the twenty-first of December, in 1213. Saint Felix died in his solitude at Cerfroi a year and about six weeks before him, on the fourth of November in the year 1212, being four score and five years and seven months old. It is related, that a little time before his death, coming to choir to matins before the rest, he saw there the Blessed Virgin with a company of heavenly spirits singing the divine office; which vision is frequently represented in pictures of this Saint. It is the constant tradition of the Order, that these two founders were canonized by a bull of Urban IV., in 1260: though the bull is nowhere extant. That the festival of St. Felix was kept in the whole diocese of Meaux in 1219, is proved by an authentic act, produced by Du Plessis. Alexander VII. in 1666 de-

*The Trinitarians were sometimes called in England Red Friars; for though their habit is white, they wear a red and blue cross patèe upon their scapular.

clared his veneration to be of time immemorial. Innocent XI. in 1679 transferred the feast of St. John to the eighth of February; and that of St. Felix to the twentieth of November.

St. Felix was seventy years of age, and worn out with austerities, when he undertook his journey on foot to Rome. Burning, however, with zeal, and longing to save all those poor, suffering souls whose rescue he had planned, he seemed to feel no fatigue; so that St. John, his companion, being amazed, could not forbear asking him how it was that neither the length of the way nor its dangers seemed to exist for him. Felix being thus forced to speak, acknowledged that he saw nearly all the time an angel before him, who held him up over the difficult passes, and spoke words of hope and courage to him which made him forget all but the object he had in view.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon us, because the Lord has anointed me to preach a release to the captives."—Isaiah lxi, 1.

ST. JOHN OF MATHA

The life of St. John of Matha was one long course of self-sacrifice for the glory of God, and the good of his neighbor. As a child, his chief delight was serving the poor; and he often told them he had come into the world for no other end but to wash their feet. He studied at Paris with such distinction that his professors advised him to become a priest, in order that his talents might render greater service to others; and for this end, John gladly sacrificed his high rank and worldly advantages. At his first Mass an angel appeared, clad in white, with a red and blue cross on his breast, and his hands reposing on the heads of a Christian and a Moorish captive. To ascertain what this signified, John went to St. Felix of Valois, a holy hermit living near Meaux, under whose direction he led a life of extreme penance.

The angel again appeared; and they then set out for Rome, to learn the will of God from the lips of the Sovereign Pontiff, who told them to devote themselves to the redemption of cap-

tives. For this purpose they founded the Order of the Holy Trinity. The religious fasted every day, and gathering alms throughout Europe took them to Barbary, to redeem the Christian slaves. They devoted themselves also to the sick and prisoners in all countries. The charity of St. John in devoting his life to the redemption of captives was visibly blessed by God. On his second return from Tunis he brought back one hundred and twenty liberated slaves. But the Moors attacked him at sea, overpowered his vessel, and doomed it to destruction, with all on board, by taking away the rudder and sails, and leaving it to the mercy of the winds. St. John tied his cloak to the mast, and prayed, saying: "Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered. O Lord, Thou wilt save the humble, and wilt bring down the eyes of the proud." Suddenly the wind filled the small sail, and, without guidance, carried the ship safely in a few days to Ostia, the port of Rome, three hundred leagues from Tunis. Worn out by his heroic labors, John died in 1213, at the age of fifty-three.

OUR LORD AND THE BLIND MAN

He stood before the Sanhedrim,
The scowling Rabbis gazed at him,
He reeked not of their praise or blame;
There was no fear, there was no shame,
For one upon whose dazzled eyes
The whole earth poured its vast surprise.

* * * * * * * *

But still they questioned: Who art thou?
What hast thou been? What art thou now?
Thou art not he who yesterday
Sat here and begged beside the way.

* * * * * * * *

He told the story o'er and o'er
It was his full heart's only lore,
A prophet on the Sabbath-day
Had touched his sightless eyes with clay,
And made him see who had been blind.
Their words passed by him like the wind,

Which raves and howls, but cannot shock
The hundred-fathom rooted rock.

* * * * * * * *

Their threats and fury all went wide;
They could not touch his Hebrew pride,
Their sneers at Jesus and His band,
Homeless and harmless in the land;
Their boasts of Moses and his Lord,
All could not change him by one word.

* * * * * * * *

I know not what this man may be,
Sinner or Saint; but as for me,
One thing I know, that I am he
Who once was blind, and now I see.

* * * * * * * *

The wisdom of the East was theirs,
And honor crowned their silver hairs.
The man they jeered and laughed to scorn
Was unlearned, poor and humbly born;
But he knew better far than they,
What came to him that Sabbath-day,
And what the Christ had done for him
He knew, and not the Sanhedrim.

Hon. John Hay.

APPARITION
TO
THE PRINCESS ERMESINDE
CLAIREFONTAINE, LUXEMBOURG

1214

Dear to each heart are all Thy feasts, sweet Jesus
Yet to my mind none half so sweetly charms
As this, which brings Thee to us, ever smiling,
A Babe, within Thy Virgin Mother's arms.

C. O. M.

BOUT two and a half miles to the southeast of Arlon, capital of Belgian Luxembourg, a charming valley gracefully winds its sinuous way between two wooded hillsides. Along its bottom a little stream dances merrily, watering the adjacent meadowland, sweeping by an occasional farm-house, and gently murmuring throughout its course, as if in response to the luxuriant foliage that stoops to lave in its sparkling current.

Known successively as Beaulieu, Bardenberg, and Clairefontaine, this valley has from a very remote period enjoyed an unusual degree of celebrity. Around it cluster memories of Roman emperors, Carlovingian monarchs, and counts of Luxembourg; while its atmosphere is redolent of pious traditions that have to do with St. Martin, St. Bernard, and Blessed Eugene III. The circumstance, however, to which the valley owes both the greater part of its centuried fame and the revival of interest which it has recently attracted, is its having been for some hundreds of years a favorite shrine of Our Blessed Mother—the seat of an ancient convent of Bernardine nuns known as the Religious of Our Lady of Clairefontaine.

To give a brief sketch of this old-time sanctuary of the Blessed Virgin, happily restored within the past year, it will be convenient to speak first of the fountain, or spring, from which the locality takes its present name—Clairefontaine (clear fountain). It may well be that from the very birth of Christianity in the Luxembourg district, Mary set this spring apart from all others of the valley; that the gratitude of the first Christians, charmed by the suave attraction of their benignant Mother, began there to proffer her public testimony of their love and homage. Be this as it may, about the middle of the twelfth century, when St. Bernard traversed the valley, the fountain which he blessed must already have attained a certain celebrity, else it had not attracted the holy monk's attention nor won the consecration of his prayers.

Is there any other glory comparable to that of sanctity? Is there any other renown so fated to live perpetually, even in the memory of men, as that which surrounds those who in their day put on "the vesture of holiness?" Writing of this incident (the blessing of the fountain) in the journey of St. Bernard and Pope Eugene III. through the valley of Beaulieu, Mr. Godfrey Kurth says:

"All the great and mighty ones of earth have trodden the Roman highway that St. Bernard followed on his passage from Rheims to Treves—from Agrippa who constructed it, to Goethe who sang its praises, and Napoleon who covered it with his victorious troops. Before the Emperor of the French, other emperors of Rome and Germany had conducted thereon their multitudinous soldiers. Attila had traversed it with his furious hordes; whole nations and civilizations had passed along its course. Yet, strange to say, nothing of all this survives in the memory of men; while the monk of Clairvaux—the pale, emaciated ascetic, whose life seemed to be merely a momentary triumph over death—has peopled with his name and his memory even the most solitary spot by which he passed in his hurried missions. St. Bernard, says tradition, stopped in the valley and blessed a fountain, whose limpid waters are still flowing. More than seven centuries have passed since that

benison was given, and the fountain still retains the name of St. Bernard, and the faithful throng around it to implore the protection of the Saint whose glory lives among them as vividly as in the days of his greatest earthly triumphs. That which the omnipotence of Charlemagne was unable to accomplish, the simple blessing of the monk effected: it immortalized the name of the humble Luxembourg valley."

It was in 1148 that St. Bernard passed through Beaulieu, or Bardenberg. Thirty-eight years later, there was born in Luxembourg Castle one who was to be the instrument through which additional glory should accrue to the valley and the fountain. The illustrious Ermesinde was the only daughter of Henry the Blind, Count of Namur and Luxembourg. A valiant princess, dowered with singular magnanimity of character, she was, besides, a true Christian heroine, whose virtues endeared her to her people, and have kept her memory as vivid as are those of her eminent descendants: the Emperor Henry VII.; the hero-king, John of Bohemia; or her saintly granddaughter, the Venerable Jeanne of Luxembourg.

Among the glories of Ermesinde, her admirers dwell most fondly on her having been considered worthy to see with her bodily eyes the Blessed Virgin Mary. The apparition occurred in the springtime of the year 1214. Recently left a widow, Ermesinde had retired to her castle at Bardenberg, to spend her period of mourning in solitude and prayer. The Fountain of St. Bernard was one of her favorite haunts. A place already sanctified by prayer and by miracles, it held for her a powerful attraction; it seemed indeed redolent of the very aroma of heaven.

Sitting one day on the root of a tufted oak whose branches overhung the fountain, she fell asleep and was favored with a vision. She beheld the heavens open, and a Lady of enchanting beauty lightly descending on a fleecy cloud. An instant later the celestial visitant had reached the hilltop above the spring. She held in her arms an Infant whose beauty surpassed that of the fairest children on earth. She approached; and she, too, stopped at the fountain, standing opposite the

enraptured Ermesinde. Suddenly around the beautiful Lady appeared a number of lambs, on whom she smiled as a mother and whom she lovingly caressed. A notable circumstance,—on the back of each of these snow-white lambs two bands of black united in the form of a cross. Ravished with the charm of so beautiful a spectacle, Ermesinde feasted her eyes thereon, and would willingly have contemplated it forever. But the vision endured for a moment only. Coming to herself, the pious Countess resolved to build near the holy fountain a convent for the Bernardine Sisters (of whom she was reminded by the lambs in her vision), to dower it, and look after its prosperity with maternal solicitude.

The new community assumed the name of the Religious of Our Lady of Clairefontaine; and Pope Alexander IV., in his Bull of Approbation and Affiliation to the Order of Citeaux, styles the convent "the monastery of Holy Mary, Virgin and Mother of God, of Clairefontaine." The convent grew rapidly, and proved a veritable source of blessings for all the surrounding country. Clairefontaine was a house of prayer; and the example of the pious Sisters who made it their home exerted a potent influence on the laity of the province, who thronged to the blessed sanctuary where Mary was pleased to scatter her favors with a prodigal hand.

Charity was, perhaps, the virtue most in evidence at the new institute—charity toward the poor of all the vicinage, who several times a week were provided with meals at the abbey; charity toward the ignorant,—for the convent was a school where the chaplain instructed the boys, and the nuns the girls; charity toward the helpless and suffering,—the convent infirmary was never empty; charity, in a word, toward all the multitudinous subjects of that heavenly virtue. To prayer and benevolence the ladies of Clairefontaine, of noble families for the most part, joined manual labor, and worked in addition for the benefit of the poor.

And so for centuries Our Lady's convent prospered beneath her gracious protection. "Its whole history," says the discerning writer whom we have already quoted, "formed naught else

than a ravishing Christian idyl, terminating in an elegy replete with chaste and holy sorrow." The elegy was chanted at the close of the last century. The terrible French Revolution brought its inevitable dowry of desolation and woe to the Clairefontaine Abbey and, on April 18, 1794, the convent and adjoining church were pillaged, sacked, and burned. When the frenzied marauders forsook the peaceful valley nothing but a mass of mournful ruins, broken arches, shattered columns, devastated cloisters, and blackened remnants of outer walls, was left to perpetuate the memory of the house of God, the asylum of innocence and prayer, the fruitful source during hundreds of years of untold blessings to Luxembourg and its people.

In 1875 the ruins of the old convent came into the possession of the Jesuit Fathers; and their project of restoring so famous a sanctuary of our Heavenly Mother took form on April the 18th, 1894, the hundredth anniversary of that sanctuary's destruction. Their exploration of the ruins led to interesting discoveries, among others to that of the celebrated fountain itself over which the church had been built, and the tomb of the sainted Ermesinde, both in a state of excellent preservation. The stonework about the fountain, as well as the rocky stairway descending thereto, was quite intact; and though buried beneath a heterogeneous mass of broken masonry and superincumbent soil, the figure on the tomb was uninjured, as was the inscription which identified it.

Yet another relic of the old Abbey that has come down through the centuries comparatively unscathed is the venerated statue of Our Lady of Clairefontaine. Originally placed above the portal of the church, it now stands on a column beneath the dome of the new chapel dedicated to Mary. We have called the statue a venerated one, and we might truthfully have added the epitaph, miraculous. Of undoubted antiquity, it was, according to the Abbé Reichling, erected by Ermesinde herself in memory of her vision. It is venerable because of the cultus of which for six hundred years it has been the object; invariably did pilgrims visiting the celebrated convent pause

before this figure of Our Lady and proffer her the first fervor of their homage and love. And that it is miraculous is proven by the clearly authenticated fact that as often as the Venerable Jeanne de Luxembourg saluted it, the head of the statue was gently inclined, as if to return the greeting.

One beautiful tradition that is still recounted in the Clairefontaine district vouches for even a more remarkable prodigy. A servant of the convent, a maiden of spotless innocence and childlike faith, was accustomed, as often as she passed the church, to bow to the statue and exclaim, "Praised be Jesus Christ!" and the Virgin as often replied, "Amen!" One day, however, the pious servant forgot the usual salutation. The statue itself supplied the omission, exclaiming, "Praised be Jesus Christ!"

But it were an endless task to cull from the garden of the Clairefontaine annals all the flowers of faith and piety and devotion to Mary that charm the heart of whosoever seeks therein for beauty and fragrance. As at all her other shrines, scattered far and wide over the habitable globe, the Blessed Virgin not infrequently vouchsafed to her Clairefontaine clients graces and favors that were palpably and unmistakably miraculous. Let us hope that the happy restoration of her ancient sanctuary may be signalized not less by a renewal of her extraordinary benefits than by an ever-increasing love for her in the hearts of all her children.

STELLA MATUTINA

E'er the day throws its radiance athwart the dark skies
The bright star of the morning comes forth from her shades;
But as soon as the glories of daylight arise,
Then effaced by their power she trembles and fades.

Then hail to thee, Mary, thou purest, and fairest!
Welcome dawn of the sunshine of life o'er the world!
Mid the dark Orient clouds a bright star thou appearest,
E'er the banner of light in the skies is unfurled.

But, oh! in His beauteous, His wondrous attire,
Comes the great orb of day in His might rolling on;
And the glow of so dazzling effulgent a fire
Fills the Heavens with the blaze of His glories alone.

Still the beam of that star, e'er so soft and so mild,
Though absorbed in His light by our souls is still seen;
Though our hearts are all burning with love of thy Child,
We hail thee, blest Mother, we hail thee our Queen!

Princess Talbot Borghese.

DEVOUT PRAYERS MADE USE OF BY ST. MECHTILDIS

1294.

O Holy Mary! our soverign Queen! as God the Father, by His omnipotence, has made thee most powerful, so assist us at the hour of our death, by defending us against all the power that is contrary to thine. "Hail Mary," etc.

O holy Mary! our sovereign Queen! as God the Son has endowed thee with so much knowledge and splendor, that it enlightens all heaven, so, in the hour of our death, illumine and strengthen our souls with the knowledge of the true faith, that they be not perverted by error or pernicious ignorance. "Hail Mary," etc.

O holy Mary! our sovereign Queen! as the Holy Ghost has plentifully replenished thee with the love of God, so instil into us at the hour of our death, the sweetness of divine love, that all bitterness at that time may become acceptable and pleasant to us. "Hail Mary," etc.

Our Blessed Lady herself taught St. Mechtildis the above-mentioned triple salutation, promising her certain assistance for it at the hour of her death.

APPARITION TO
B. REGINALD OF ORLEANS, O. P.
ROME, ITALY

APPARITION
TO
B. REGINALD OF ORLEANS O. P.
ROME, ITALY

1218

"I sing the story of a life divine,
A woman's life, whose memory I adore;
Oh, Mary-Mother, that sweet name of thine
My humble heart shall worship evermore."

Zorrilla.

EGINALD was born at Saint-Gilles, in the south of France, and had taught Canon Law with applause in the University of Paris before being raised to the dignity of Dean of the Chapter of Orleans. Going to Rome, in company with his Bishop, in the year 1218, with the intention of visiting the tombs of the Apostles before going on pilgrimage to the holy places of Jerusalem, he there became acquainted with Saint Dominic. To him he opened his whole heart, telling him that he greatly desired to quit all things in order to go about preaching Jesus Christ in a state of voluntary poverty. The holy patriarch joyfully promised to receive him into the Order. Shortly after, Reginald was taken dangerously ill, and the blessed Dominic, as he himself related to the brethren, earnestly implored God that He would not take from him a son as yet hardly born, but that He would at least prolong his life, if it were but for a little while. And even while he prayed, the Blessed Virgin Mary, accompanied by the virgin martyrs, Saint Cecelia and Saint Catherine of Alexandria, appeared to Master Reginald and, extending her virginal hand, anointed his eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, hands and feet, pronouncing certain words appropriate to

each anointing. Then she showed him the habit of the Friars Preachers, saying to him, "Behold the habit of thy Order," and she disappeared from his eyes, and Reginald perceived that he was cured. He related all that had passed to Saint Dominic, praying him, however, to keep the circumstances secret till after his death. Saint Dominic complied with his request; and, in announcing to his brethren that the linen surplice of the Canons Regular was to be exchanged for the woolen scapular, which was the particular part of the habit which the Blessed Virgin had been seen holding in her hands, he did not make known the reason of the change until after Reginald's death. This beautiful story is commemorated in the ceremony of clothing, in the words which accompany the giving of the scapular, "Receive the holy scapular of our Order, the most distinguished part of the Dominican habit, the maternal pledge from heaven of the love of the Blessed Virgin Mary towards us."

The remaining events of blessed Reginald's brief but brilliant career must be summed up in a few words. After his clothing, he departed for the Holy Land, and on his return, after founding a monastery in Sicily, he ruled the Order as Vicar whilst Saint Dominic visited Spain. At the same time he assumed the government of the monastery of Bologna, where, within six months, he received more than a hundred members into the Order, many of them men of great learning and distinction; so that it was a common saying that it was scarce safe to go and hear Master Reginald if you did not wish to take the Friar's habit. The great talents and success of Reginald induced Saint Dominic to remove him to Paris, to the great sorrow of his brethren; for, notwithstanding the severity of his discipline, they were tenderly attached to their saintly Prior and wept as though being torn from their mothers' arms.

At Paris, his burning eloquence drew all to hear him, and vocations to the Order were as striking as at Bologna. Being one day asked how he, who had been used to so luxurious a life in the world, had found it possible to persevere in the pen-

itential life of the Order, Reginald humbly cast his eyes upon the ground and replied: "Truly, I do not think to merit anything for that before the tribunal of God. He has given me so much consolation in my soul, that the rigors of which you speak have become very sweet and easy to me."

One of the most remarkable subjects whom he drew to the Order was blessed Jordan of Saxony, to whom God was pleased to reveal the approaching death of Reginald in a vision, wherein he beheld a clear and sparkling fountain suddenly spring up in the Dominican Church of Saint James, and as suddenly fail.

The death of the holy man took place in February, A.D. 1220, when he had worn the habit scarcely two years. When Abbot Matthew, who then governed the Community at Paris, went to announce to him that his illness was mortal and proposed to administer to him the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, the dying man made answer: "I do not fear the assault of death, since the blessed hands of Mary anointed me in Rome. Nevertheless, because I would not make light of the Church's Sacrament, I will receive it, and humbly ask that it may be given to me."

Blessed Reginald has ever been held in veneration in the Order, though he was not solemnly beatified until the pontificate of Pius IX.

CHILD OF MARY

"Child of Mary!" Name of honor,
Prouder far than kingly crown,
God himself to win that title
From His heavenly throne came down;
He, the First-born Child of Mary,
Calls us to His Mother's side,
Shares with us His dearest treasure,
"Mother! 'twas for these I died."

O Immaculate, unfallen,
Tarnished by no breath of sin!
Yet I dare to call thee "Mother!"
Open, Mother, let me in!

Thou of Mercy's self art Mother,
And thy heart is meek and mild,
Open wide thy arms and take me
As a mother takes her child.

"Child of Mary." May my feelings,
Thoughts, words, deeds, and heart's desires,
All befit a lowly creature
Who to such high name aspires.
Ne'er shall sin (for sin could only)
From my sinless Mother sever—
Mary's child till death shall call me,
Child of Mary then forever.

Rev. Matthew Russell, S.J.

SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF MARINERS
LE GARDE, FRANCE
1218

Ave Maria! Mother hear us,
Guide the sailor safe and free,
Pity all thy wave-rocked children
Drifting helpless on the sea.

Irene.

TOWARDS the end of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century, a fisherman of Marseilles being overtaken at sea by a tempest, tried in vain to regain the port, and was in danger of shipwreck. He was alone in his boat, which sprang a leak;—the wind was adverse, and his rudder was lost. He now felt, with beating heart, that nothing less than a miracle could save him; that he must bid adieu to every hope of again beholding his dear family. Agitated by these thoughts, he raised his eyes to the rock (de la Garde), which rises like a sentinel of granite upon the mountain that overlooks the sea, port, and city of Marseilles. On the summit of this rock he fancied he saw an ærial figure, whose transparent form could be traced in the deep obscurity which at this instant enveloped the earth and sky. He also imagined that the figure held out its hand to him in an encouraging manner.

From the instant that he felt himself in danger of perishing, the fisherman had never ceased to invoke the Star of the Sea, who is ever ready to aid poor mariners in their distress. He therefore firmly believed that she had come to his assistance. He fell on his knees, and, leaving his boat to her guidance, he sang with all his might the *Ave Maris Stella,* the deep tones of his voice rising above the roaring of the waves.

The boat, as if drawn by a powerful hand, darted through the waters, and soon reached the foot of the mountain. The rescued fisherman sprang ashore, and eagerly ascended the steep declivity of the mountain, till he reached the top; but nothing was to be seen. He then fell on his knees and returned thanks to his protectress. On reaching his cottage, he related his adventure to his family, who had been praying for his safety.

All who heard the event wondered how it was possible for him to reach the shore alive; and no one doubted that he owed his life to the miraculous interposition of Our Blessed Lady. Other seamen related how they had several times seen, at the summit of Mount la Garde, a most beautiful Apparition, which they could scarcely describe; but on its appearance, the tempests calmed, and they were delivered from danger. They could not give any other interpretation to these events than that the Blessed Virgin had chosen this rock as the spot whence she loved to come to the help of distressed mariners. A chapel was therefore erected on the summit, and was enriched with a statue of Our Lady, which was called "Help of Mariners." This was in the year of grace 1218.

Since that time, Our Lady of Help has always been regarded as the special protectress of Marseilles, and the refuge of distressed mariners. No one dreams of embarking on the shortest voyage without placing himself under her protection; nor does any one undertake a long journey without visiting her chapel.

The numerous *ex-votos* which adorn the Chapel of Our Lady Help of Mariners, and the rich plate and precious stones which fill her treasury, are striking testimonials of benefits received through her powerful patronage.

Only a few years ago, a ship, long tossed about by tempestuous waves, was about to perish, when the sailors, seeing that all their own efforts were useless, threw themselves on their knees and fervently implored the aid of Our Lady of Help, their only hope. The passengers imitated them, and even the steersman left the wheel. At the moment that every eye

was turned upward, a most wonderful spectacle or vision presented itself to the view. They all saw, dimly, a figure at the wheel, which seized it and directed the vessel's course. All remained kneeling, while they felt that the ship, by a miraculous power, was gliding through the waves at an extraordinarily rapid rate. Shortly afterwards the vessel triumphantly entered the port, and the passengers and crew disembarked in safety. Following the first impulses of their hearts, the twenty-nine persons who were on board were barefooted, with their clothes still dripping with water, to the chapel on the rock, to chant the *Magnificat,* amid tears of gratitude.

But it is not sailors alone who experience the powerful patronage of Our Lady of Help. In 1832, when the cholera appeared at Marseilles, and there was not a house in the city without its sick, the people assembled in the public squares, demanding that Our Lady of Help should be carried in procession. So the next day the clergy, vested in the penitential robes of the Church, the soldiers of the garrison, all the seamen in the port, and all those who were untouched by the pestilential breath of the cholera, ascended the mount, and, amid tears and lamentations, brought Our Blessed Lady's image down to the city.

She was borne through all the populous streets. All the sick saluted her from their windows, or, if unable to rise, from their beds. The children offered her flowers, and sang pious canticles. The day previous had scarce been long enough to inter the bodies of the dead, but on this day not a single funeral took place. The cholera had fled before the Health of the Sick, the Consoler of the Afflicted.

Such miracles, unaccountable as they are to unbelievers, have been vouchsafed in every age of Christianity to those who devoutly honor and fervently invoke the all-powerful Mother of the Redeemer of the world.

The year 1889 showed a large increase in the number of pilgrims and of offerings at the Shrine of Notre Dame de la Garde, at Marseilles. A short time ago the number of Com-

munions during the year did not exceed forty-five thousand; in 1889 they came up to seventy thousand, and the number of Masses celebrated was seven thousand.

THE SAILOR'S SONG*

Queen of the waves! look forth across the ocean
From north to south, from east to stormy west;
See how the waters, with tumultuous motion,
Rise up and foam without a pause or rest.

But fear we not, though storm clouds round us gather;
Thou art our Mother, and thy little Child
Is the All-Merciful, our tender Father,
Lord of the sea and of the tempest wild.

Help, then, sweet Queen, in our exceeding danger;
By thy seven griefs, in pity, Lady, save;
Think of the Babe that slept within the manger,
And help us now, dear Lady of the Wave!

Up to thy shrine we look, and see the glimmer
Thy votive lamp sheds down on us afar;
Light of our eyes! oh! let it ne'er grow dimmer,
Till in the sky we hail the morning star.

Then joyful hearts shall kneel around thine altar
And grateful psalms re-echo down the nave,
Our faith in thy sweet power can never falter,
Mother of God! Our Lady of the Wave!

Morwenna P. Hawker.

*On a hill at S'Addresse, a suburb of Havre, is erected a chapel dedicated to Notre Dame des Flots. It is visible to vessels passing up and down the Channel.

APPARITION

TO

ST. HYACINTH
KIEV, RUSSIA

1220

The Mother of all mothers; yet, no less
The Virgin of all virgins; yea, the more:
For, 'tis from thy deific fruitfulness
Have drawn all virgins their perennial store.
Father Edmund, C.P.

SAINT HYACINTH belonged to the noble Polish family of Odrowatz, whence at a later date sprang the house of Kosta, which gave birth to St. Stanislas, the novice Saint of the Society of Jesus. St. Hyacinth was born near Breslau, in Silesia, in 1185. He was the brother of blessed Ceslas, and from infancy gave promise of unusual talent and virtue, and of extraordinary gifts, both of nature and grace, specially of a tender love and compassion for the poor. As a child, he would gaze at the portraits of his forefathers which hung in the halls of his ancestral home, and ask to be told the story of their exploits; and, when he grew older, he would often encourage himself to higher things by the remembrance of their example. The early education of the two brothers was superintended by their uncle, who was afterwards Bishop of Cracow, who was so struck by the precocious sanctity of Hyacinth as to predict that he would one day be raised to the altars of the Church. Both embraced the ecclesiastical state and accompanied their uncle on a visit to Rome, where, they were present when St. Dominic raised the young Napoleon to life, and subsequently received the habit of the Order from the hands of the holy Patriach in the chapter-room of Santa Sabina.

St. Hyacinth, during his short period of probation, learnt faithfully to copy the life of St. Dominic, especially his spirit of prayer and penance, and his zeal for the salvation of souls. Their noviciate over, he and his companion set out for Poland, preaching and founding monasteries as they went along. Their route lay through Northern Italy, Styria, Austria, Moravia, and Silesia. On arriving at Cracow, they gathered around them a fervent band of novices and established a large monastery. Faithful to the Dominican law of dispersion, St. Hyacinth soon dispatched blessed Ceslas and Henry of Moravia to plant the Order in Bohemia, whilst he set out to evangelize Prussia, Denmark, Scandinavia, and Russia. He realized St. Dominic's desire of preaching to the Cumans, amongst whom he found his brethren already laboring, and then continued his Apostolic journeys through Turkestan, Tartary, and Thibet, as far as the great wall of China. Modern missionaries have found traces of his labors in these countries. He also preached along the shores of the Black Sea, and in the islands of the Grecian Archipelago.

He ever had a tender devotion to the holy Mother of God, and she in her turn showered on him many favors. She once appeared to him on the Feast of her Assumption, and gave him this consoling promise: "Hyacinth, my son, rejoice; for thy prayers are pleasing to my Son, the Saviour of the world; and whatsoever thou shalt ask of Him in my name, thou shalt obtain through my intercession." From that day the Saint's confidence was so increased, that he was not afraid to ask even for things which were, naturally speaking, almost impossible of accomplishment; and his life became a series of miracles, such as it has been granted to few Saints to work since the days of the Apostles.

One day, when the Saint was beginning his Mass in the monastery at Kiev, the Tartars suddenly broke into the city, and he and his community were compelled to take to flight. Still clad in his sacred vestments, St. Hyacinth took the Blessed Sacrament from the tabernacle and prepared to depart. But when he had got half way down the church, he heard a voice

proceeding from a large alabaster statue of Our Blessed Lady, saying: "Hyacinth, my son, wilt thou leave me behind to be trampled under foot by the Tartars? Take me with thee." "How can I, holy Virgin?" replied the Saint; "thy Image is too heavy." "Take me, nevertheless," answered Our Lady; "my Son will lighten the burden." Then the Saint clasped the massive image with one arm, and, bearing the Blessed Sacrament in the other, went forth courageously, and crossed the Dnieper dryshod, whilst his brethren who followed him, stretched their mantles on the water and embarking upon them, also crossed the river in safety. The miraculous image is still preserved at Lemberg.

When the term of St. Hyacinth's earthly pilgrimage was drawing to a close, as he was one day saying Mass, he suddenly beheld a dazzling light descend from heaven, in the midst of which appeared a long procession of angels and virgins, forming an escort to their Queen. The celestial company prostrated round the altar whilst the Saint offered the Holy Sacrifice. At its conclusion he saw Our Blessed Lady crowned by her Divine Son with a crown of flowers and stars, which Mary then took from her head and showed to him, saying: "Behold! this crown is for thee."

He was taken ill on the following Feast of Saint Dominic. On the eve of the Assumption he made a touching address to his brethren, after which he rose to assist at the Matins and Mass of the festival. Then, kneeling on the altar steps, supported by his weeping children, he received the Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction. They carried him back to his cell, where he calmly awaited his release. When the end was close at hand, he intoned the 30th Psalm: "In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped," and breathed forth his holy soul to God at the verse: "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit." It was the 15th of August, A.D. 1257. After his death he appeared in glory to the Bishop of Cracow, in company with the martyr Bishop, St. Stanislas. He was also seen by a holy nun who lived near Cracow, being led by Our Blessed Lady into heaven amidst a glorious company of angels and of Saints.

Numerous miracles were worked at his tomb, including the raising of as many as fifty persons from the dead. He was canonized A.D. 1594 by Clement VIII., and Urban VIII. extended the celebration of his festival to the universal Church.

The Russians, who follow the rites of the Greek Church, profess the greatest veneration for the Blessed Virgin. When they perceive her image, however far off, they prostrate several times, and multiply signs of the Cross with extreme rapidity. At Moscow, a statue of the Blessed Virgin, to which miracles are attributed, ornaments one of the gates of the Kremlin; two bare-headed sentinels mount guard by it, night and day. The people never fail to uncover their heads respectfully when they pass before this image.

The Czars were formerly crowned in the noble Muscovite cathedral of the Assumption, where the bodies of the Russian patriarchs are deposited; the enclosure of the sanctuary was covered with plates of silver and gold; the sacred vessels and episcopal vestments of this cathedral are still of unparalleled richness; the picture of the Blessed Virgin, placed in a large gilt frame on Our Lady's altar, is carried in procession in a superb carriage all of plate-glass, like the coaches seen formerly at the coronation of the French Kings. Four horses richly caparisoned draw this modern triumphal car at a slow and solemn pace.

This curious story comes from a celebrated Shrine at Wilna in Russia Poland: In February a Russian, who cannot now be identified, brought to the parish priest of the Ostra Brama chapel, Father Franklewicz, several very large wax candles, with the request that they might be kept burning night and day as a votive offering before Our Lady's image.

The request excited no surprise, as even the schismatic Russians have a devotion to the Madonna and frequently bring offerings to the Shrine, but as it would have been imprudent to leave the candles burning all night without watching, the sacristan was told to sit up in a room near by the altar. About midnight the watcher extinguished the candles. Asked next morning why he had done so, the man declared that in his sleep

he had repeatedly heard the cry, "Put out the candles!" and with some natural feeling of awe had done so.

Upon careful examination, the candles turned out to be hollow and filled with gunpowder. There is no doubt an attempt had been made to destroy the famous Madonna, which for so many centuries had been looked upon, even by the Russians, as the mighty protectress of the Catholic Faith.

PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Saintly Virgin, with every grace o'erflowing,
Thou whose humility so sweetly true and lowly,
Mounted thee to heaven, whence my prayers thou hearest;
Thou source and fount of mercy,
Serene sun of justice, sending thy rays
Through long dark years of sin, obscure and innumerable.
Three sweetest of names hast thou in thyself made holy,
Mother, daughter, spouse divine;
Virgin glorious.
Woman that soothes, consoles and enloosens our spirits from bruising bands,
Spreading sweet freedom thro' the world, and happiness,
By the wounds thy saintly sufferings made,
Send peace to rule my heart, thou truly blessed.
Sacred and holy, thou Virgin divine,
Delay not now, for I draw near the verge.
These days of mine, more swift than fleeting arrow,
In misery's gloom and sin
Their way have lost; let not death win me so.
The day draws near, hastened on by fleeting time,
And death's dark wings lend aid to time's swift course;
O Virgin! sole and only one,
This heart through conscience scourged, by death is now o'ershadowed;
Poor gift, I give myself to thy Son holy,
True man, true God.
Receive a fainting spirit into thy peace eternal.

Francesca Petrarch.

APPARITION TO
ST. FRANCIS, F.O.S.F.
ASSISI, ITALY

APPARITION
TO
ST. FRANCIS, F.O.S.F.
ASSISI, ITALY

1221

Then into being sprang that image fair,
The Mother of God: the Incarnation's gem;
Immaculate and full of graces rare.
Oh Dei Mater, Virgin-mystery.
Oh all embracing heart of Mary mild,
With earthly Mother's heart beyond compare,
For it holds Jesus, holds the Holy Child;
And thou art God's dear Mother, and our own.

Ymal Oswin.

T. FRANCIS, the son of a merchant of Assisi, was born in that city A. D. 1182. Chosen by God to be a living manifestation to the world of Christ's poor and suffering life on earth, he was early inspired with a high esteem and burning love of poverty and humiliation. The thought of the Man of Sorrows, who had not where to lay His head, filled him with holy envy of the poor, and constrained him to renounce the wealth and worldly station which he abhorred. The scorn and hard usage which he met with from his father and townsmen when he appeared among them in the garb of poverty were delightful to him. "Now," he exclaimed, I can say truly, "Our Father who art in heaven." But Divine love burned in him too mightily not to kindle like desires in other hearts. Many joined themselves to him, and were constituted by Pope Innocent III., into a religious Order, which spread rapidly throughout Christendom. St. Francis, after visiting the East in the vain quest of martyrdom, spent his life like his Divine Master—now in preaching to the multitudes, now amid desert solitudes in fasting and contemplation.

During one of these retreats he received on his hands, feet,

and side the print of the five bleeding wounds of Jesus. With the cry, "Welcome, sister Death," he passed to the glory of his God October 4, 1226.

In all the churches of the three Orders, instituted by St. Francis, there is a great festival celebrated every year on the 2d of August, to which pious Christians hasten from far and near in Order to practice this devotion. This festival is called Portiuncula, which is in reality, as its singular name indicates, a festival of a peculiar kind. Portiuncula is neither a Saint nor a mystery, but it is the name of a small church near Assisi in Italy, which has become famous throughout the world by means of the memorable and most singular indulgence which St. Francis has gained for this little chapel. St. Bonaventure, the great doctor of the church, relates in his life of St. Francis, that the Saint was always inflamed with a wonderful love for sinners, and that he constantly bewailed the sad condition of men who, by committing mortal sin, stain and tarnish their souls, so dearly bought with the precious blood of Christ. He spent whole nights in prayer, offering himself as a sacrifice to God by means of the severest penances in order to find grace with God, through the merits of Our Divine Saviour and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, for so many unhappy and blinded souls that do not seek for reconciliation, but in their impenitence hasten towards a most terrible judgment. Such pure and ready love was so pleasing to Our Divine Lord Jesus Christ, that He rewarded the Saint in a miraculous manner, offering him a means by which he might induce numberless sinners of various countries and any age to sincere repentance. The lections of the Franciscan Breviary, drawn from the most reliable sources, relate the particulars of this event in the following manner: Of all the churches which the blessed father St. Francis loved and venerated, one in particular was the little chapel of St. Mary of the Angels, commonly called Portiuncula. This apparently insignificant church, situated on the plains of the beautiful valley of Spoleta, a short distance from Assisi, the Saint made the first church of his Order, after having restored it from its decaying condition and sanctified

it by his prayers, tears, and works of penance. In the year 1221, in the month of September, St. Francis had a vision in this holy place. Christ, accompanied by His Holy Mother and a multitude of Angels, appeared at the altar, encouraging him with kind words, "that he might ask a favor for the salvation of souls." The Saint, trusting in the intercession of the Most Holy Mother, with great confidence, addressed the Lord, saying: "I, a poor sinner, ask of Thy Divine Majesty this favor for the Christian people: that all who, having sincerely confessed and devoutly visit this church may obtain a general indulgence and full remission of all their sins." As Our Lord remained silent at this petition, St. Francis had recourse to the intercession of His Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and it was by her powerful assistance that he obtained the grant of his petition, with the injunction, however, to repair to the Vicar of Christ, Honorius III., who was then Sovereign Pontiff, and to ask this indulgence at his hands in the name of the Lord. Early the next morning the Saint set out with his disciple, Brother Masseo, towards Perugia, where the Pope was then residing; here in most simple terms he related to the Holy Father the mission he had received from Christ, and begged him, as Vicar of Our Supreme Lord, to give his consent to the indulgence and thus seal the favor received from above. The Pope was surprised at this unusual petition and, notwithstanding his great veneration for the Saint, hesitated to give his consent and, this so much the more since all the cardinals who were present opposed the grant of the indulgence. The Lord, however, Who had granted this favor for the salvation of sinners, directed the heart of His Vicegerent in such a manner that he finally consented to this indulgence, and declared it valid for all future times without enjoining any other conditions than a sincere confession and a devout visit to the church of Portiuncula. But this favor he limited to only one day of the year, and as the Saint did not yet know what day of the year was to be chosen for the gaining of this indulgence, he continued to pray for fifteen months to gain the necessary light from God as to his doubt. It was only in the year 1223; that Christ ap-

peared to him once more, declaring it to be His will, that the said indulgence was to last from the Vespers of the 1st of August until sunset of the following day. In the "Annals of the Friars Minor" (by Wodling), it is related that the servant of God received from Our Divine Lord three white and three red roses of exquisite beauty as an external ratification of the reality of his vision, it being in the midst of winter, when a rose was nowhere to be found. Now the Saint, accompanied by three brothers, again went to the Pope, then in Rome, to whom he related the incident and presented the miraculous roses, whilst his three holy companions confirmed by their testimony what they had heard of the vision. The Pope invited them for the next day to the consistory of the cardinals, where they might renew their petition. This was done, and so powerful was the impression which the sanctity and the few simple words of St. Francis made on the Pope and the cardinals that they opposed no longer. Thus the Pope confirmed this extraordinary indulgence, and at the same time commissioned seven bishops to go to the little church of St. Mary of the Angels on the 1st day of August, 1223, and there solemnly proclaim the said indulgence. For more than two hundred years this indulgence could not be gained in any other church than the chapel of Portiuncula. Pope Sixtus IV. in 1480 was the first who granted that all the nuns who lived in confinement and followed the rule of St. Francis might gain this indulgence in their own chapel in order to prevent the many evils resulting from the journeying of so many religious. Finally Pope Gregory XV. (1622) extended the indulgence to all the churches of the three Orders of St. Francis. Hence, all the faithful of the secular, as well as religious state may gain this indulgence in said churches as though in the chapel of Portiuncula itself, provided, however, that besides making a good confession they receive Holy Communion. This indulgence may be applied to the poor souls in Purgatory.

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

I gaze upon His gentle face
Deep furrowed by the course of tears
Shed not for self—self had no place
Within his heart for many years.
But oh, the tears unceasing flow
That men their God so little know!

"My God," he cries, "my God, my all!
How blind the eye that will not see,
How deaf the ear that heeds no call,
How hard the heart that's closed to Thee!
Alas, how many deaf and blind
And hard of heart to God so kind!

"His praise the feathered songsters chant,
The lowing kine, the bleating sheep,
The fragrant flower, the tree, the plant
The finny fishes of the deep;
The clouds, the wind, the land, the sea
All sing to God in harmony.

"My God, my all," again he cries,
"Would that a thousand hearts I had
To love for those who Thee despise,
To love for those who make Thee sad!
A seraph's heart, ah, give to me
That I may love Thee worthily!

"What mean these marks in hand and feet?
What means the lance-wound in your side?
That I should share Christ's wounds, 'tis meet,
Who serve a Master crucified.
And so His livery I wear,
The stigmata of Jesus bear."

H. V. R.

APPARITION TO
B. ALBERT THE GREAT, BP., OP.
PADUA, ITALY

APPARITION

TO

B. ALBERT THE GREAT, BP., O.P.
PADUA, ITALY

1223

Virgin! from all soil of sin
Virgin pure! to thee we bow;
Saintly Mother! chosen Queen
One with the godlike thou!

Goethe's "Faust."

ALBERT THE GREAT was born at Laubing in Swabia, on the banks of the Danube, about A. D. 1203. He was of noble parentage and sent to study at the University of Padua, where, however, he made little or no progress, being naturally dull and incapable of learning. But in spite of his incapacity for human science, blessed Albert made rapid advances in the science of the Saints and would willingly have devoted all his time to prayer and meditation. He was specially fond of praying in the Dominican Church; but his uncle, who had charge of him, and who feared that he might be led to enter the Order, exacted from him a promise not to set foot in that church for a stated time. The promise was faithfully observed, but the youth continued to practice the devotion of the Rosary, which he had learnt from the Friars, earnestly imploring Our Blessed Lady to obtain for him light to know the way in which God willed that he should serve Him, and save his soul. One day, when he was thus praying before her image, she appeared to him surrounded by light, and gave him the assurance of her continual patronage and of his eternal salvation, provided he should enter the Order of Preachers, of which she had obtained the institution from her Divine Son. As soon, therefore, as

he was free from the engagement entered into with his uncle, he received the habit from the hands of blessed Jordan of Saxony and was immediately sent to Cologne.

There blessed Albert was the companion and brother in religion of some of the most learned men of the day; and, being himself very dull, the humiliating contrast filled him with confusion and discouragement. He was even on the point of giving up his vocation and abandoning the Order, when his Heavenly Mother once more came to his aid in a prophetic dream. It seemed to him that he was in the act of entering from the monastery, when he found his way barred by some ladies of noble aspect, who, having inquired into the cause of his flight, led him to the feet of one who appeared to be their Queen, and bade him ask her for the help he needed. Albert accordingly entreated Mary to take pity on him, and to obtain for him an illuminating grace to understand philosophy, which was then the subject of his study. The Mother of God consoled him by the request, bidding him devote himself henceforth to prayer and study in the Order to which she had called him. He ceased to find himself no longer the dull man, and the world very soon heard of the fame in every branch of science of "Albert the Philosopher." He became distinguished for his proficiency in natural science as well as in philosophy and theology. Indeed, his profound mastery of physical science in a day when such subjects were but little studied, gained for him, among the vulgar, the reputation of being a magician, a character he figures in the popular tales and ballads of Germany. So deeply did he penetrate into the secrets of nature, that his humility became alarmed, and he prayed earnestly to his Heavenly Mother that she would not suffer his learning to be hurtful to his soul, and that he might use it solely for the glory of God. The Lady once more appeared, and consoled him, promising him that his faith should not fail, and predicting that, in token of his wisdom being a heavenly gift, it should all be taken from him by the relief of a public disputation sometime before his death.

After teaching in several of the monasteries of Germany,

blessed Albert was sent to Paris, where such vast crowds flocked to hear him that he was obliged to deliver his lectures in the open air on a spot afterwards called "Place Maubert," i. e., the square of "Maitre (Master) Albert."

After the death of blessed Jordan he governed the Order in the capacity of Vicar-general until the election of St. Raymund. He then returned to Cologne, and soon afterwards had as his disciples St. Thomas Aquinas, blessed Ambrose of Siena, blessed James of Mevani, and other learned men. When a virulent attack was made on the mendicant Orders by the jealous hatred of William de St. Amour, blessed Albert took a leading part in the defence. He ruled the German Province of the Order with great firmness and prudence, and maintained regular observance with the utmost strictness. Pope Urban IV. made him Bishop of Ratisbon, in which office he showed himself a true father of the poor and a faithful shepherd of the flock. After a time, by his earnest entreaties, he obtained permission to resign his dignity and retired to his beloved monastery of Cologne. He was compelled, however, to leave his solitude in order to take part in the General Council of Lyons, A. D. 1274, after which he returned to Cologne to resume his life of prayer, study, and teaching.

In the year 1277, in the midst of a public lecture, the holy old man suddenly lost the thread of his argument and found himself unable to proceed. Remembering the fulfilment of the words spoken to him by Our Blessed Lady long years before, he related to his astonished audience the history of his life, telling them how all his extraordinary intellectual gifts had come to him through Mary's intercession, and that their failure was a sign of his approaching death. The three remaining years of his life were entirely consecrated to exercises of devotion: and having received the Last Sacraments he died without an illness, seated in his chair, surrounded by his brethren, on November 15, A. D. 1280. He was beatified by Clement X.

THE SWEETNESS OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

The antiphon "Hail Holy Queen," which we recite every morning at the foot of the altar after the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice, ends with the exclamation: "O sweet Virgin Mary!" This invocation, with the two preceding it, welled forth from the heart of St. Bernard when on one occasion a great concourse of people in the Cathedral of Speier had finished the singing of the *Salve Regina.*

Blessed Albert the Great, in one of those paraphrases so much affected by the Saints of the Middle Ages, has enumerated as follows the sweetnesses which the pious soul may find in Mary:

"Sweet in her glance, full of mercy, she turns on us continually her maternal eyes.

"Sweet in the tone of her voice, she melts in our behalf the Heart of her Son, and appeases His justice.

"Sweet in her benignant smile, she binds together heaven and earth.

"Sweet in her acquiescence to our desires, she graciously bends her head to listen to our slightest prayer.

"Sweet in her greeting on the day of the Visitation, she floods with joy her cousin Elizabeth, and fills with the Holy Ghost the soul of John the Baptist. When we address her in the *Ave Maria,* she proffers us from heaven, with inexpressible goodness, our salvation so fondly desired.

"Sweet in the fruit of her womb, Mary, an aromatic plant, has produced the Flower of Jesse, whose perfume scents the earth; she carried on the flourishing branch of her virginity this Fruit, which delights and satiates the very angels.

"Sweet in her contact, she wraps in the crib with delicate care the members of her new-born Son; and touches with not less admirable precaution the wounds of our souls.

"Sweet in her carriage, she advances like a queen who scatters at every step favors without number; but especially when, with outstretched arms and smiling mien, she glides over the

waves to preserve us from shipwreck, how sweet is not her attitude!

"Sweet in her respiration, her perfumed breath refreshes, dilates, and gives new life.

"Sweet in each of her words, her lips distil milk and honey.

"Sweet in her song, she intones the canticle of harmony ineffable that only virgins may sing with her.

"Sweet in her thoughts, she dreams only of establishing peace between her first-born, Jesus, and her other adopted children.

"Sweet in that which is sweetest, affection, her Immaculate Heart is the sanctuary of all tenderness.

"Sweet in the odors of her humility, she captivated God Himself.

"Sweet to speak of, her very name is incomparable music.

"Sweet to invoke, her solicitude never tires; and so she becomes all things to all persons.

"Sweet to discourse upon, she is the intoxicating wine at the banquet of sacred eloquence.

"Sweet to the palate of the soul, she is the mysterious manna which delights all tastes.

"Sweet to remembrance, the more we recall her goodness, the more the memory rejoices."

A LEGEND OF THE CATHEDRAL OF COLOGNE

Several years before the foundation stone of the famous Cathedral was laid, there lived a man who was far in advance of all his contemporaries in the cultivation of human knowledge. This was Albertus Magnus, of the Order of St. Dominic. At this period Conrad von Hochstaden occupied the archiepiscopal throne at Cologne, and had for some time been engrossed with the thought of erecting a vast and majestic cathedral. With this object in view he caused the friar to be summoned before him, and directed him to design a plan for

the erection of a building which should eclipse in splendor all then existing structures.

Albertus cogitated day and night in his lonely cell over the grand idea which had been entrusted to him; he prayed fervently and continuously that God would assist him. But, notwithstanding all his meditation and prayer, a mist seemed to enshroud his imagination; no picture that he could reduce to shape would present itself. His heart was bowed down with anxiety as in the silent watches of the night he sat immersed in thought and reflection; and yet the shadowy outline of a superb temple floated before his mind and seemed to fill his thoughts. When he was tired out with the strain of mental exertion, he would cast himself upon his knees and implore the Blessed Virgin to assist him in the task which he was unable to accomplish alone. In this way weeks passed by.

On one occasion, when Albertus had been sitting by the flickering light of his lamp, deeply immersed in the construction of a design, after offering a fervent prayer for help, he became overpowered with sleep. It may have been midnight when he awoke. His cell was filled with a heavenly radiance, and the door leading to the hall of the monastery was standing open. Albertus rose in terror from his seat; it seemed as if a flash of lightning had passed before his eyes, and he became aware of four men dressed in white cassocks entering his cell, with crowns of burnished gold, glistening like fire, on their heads. The first was a grave old man, with a long, flowing white beard covering his breast; in his hand he held a pair of compasses; the second, somewhat younger in appearance, carried a mason's square; the third, a powerful man, whose chin was covered with a dark curly beard, held a rule; and the fourth, a handsome youth with auburn locks, brought a level. They walked in with grave and solemn tread, and behind them, in all her celestial beauty, came Our Lady, carrying in her right hand a lily stalk with brightly gleaming flowers. She made a sign to her companions, whereupon they proceeded to sketch, with practiced hands, a design in lines of fire upon the bare walls of the cell. The pillars rose on high, the arches curved to meet them,

and two majestic towers soared into the blue vault of heaven. Albertus stood lost in contemplation and admiration of the glorious picture thus presented to his gaze.

As suddenly as it had appeared, the heavenly vision again vanished, and Albertus found himself alone; but the plan of the splendid edifice, which had been drawn by the four celestial architects, under the direction of the Virgin Mother, was traced upon his memory in ineffaceable lines. Very soon after this he presented a plan of the Cathedral of Cologne to Archbishop Conrad. The most high-flown aspirations of the prelate had been surpassed beyond measure. The foundations of the building were soon afterward laid, and future generations carried on the erection, until completed as we now see it, a wonder of the whole world.

THE BELLS OF COLOGNE

The bells of the magnificent Cathedral of Cologne are in keeping with that wondrous edifice. The peal includes five mammoth bells composing the gamut F. G. A. B. C. The Emperor bell *Kaiserglocke,* C, cast 1875, weighs 27 tons; *Pretiosa,* G, cast 1448, weighs a little over 11 tons; *Speciosa,* A, cast 1449, weighs 6¼ tons; *"Bell of the Magi,"* H, recast 1880, weighs 3¾ tons; "St. Ursula's bell," F, cast 1862, weighs 2½ tons.

The Emperor bell is larger and heavier than any other bell in Europe. It was successfully cast by Andreas Hamm in Frankenthal, after three abortive attempts. The perpendicular height is 14½ ft.; the diameter at bottom, 11½ ft.; the circumference, 35½ ft. The bell is suspended by means of a screw to which the hammer is also attached. This screw weighs ½ ton; the hammer, or tongue, is 10 ft. 10 in. long, and weighs 16 cwt. The metal is 10⅝ in. thick at the mouth, and 4 in. thick above. The casting required the metal of 22 large cannon, captured from the French in the Franco-Prussian war, together with about 5 more tons of tin.

The six arms which form the crown of the Emperor bell are

ornamented with angels' heads, and where they are connected with the bell itself they take the shape of lions' claws. Immediately below the crown the following inscription, in three lines, appears:

Guilielmus, augustissimus imperator Germanorum, rex Borussorum, pie memor cœlestis auxilii accepti in gerendo felicissime conficiendoque nuperrimo bello Gallico, instaurato imperio Germanico bellica tormenta captiva æris quinquaginta millia pondo jussit conflari in campanam suspendendam in hac admirandæ structuræ æde exædificationi tandem proxima. Cui victoriosissimi principis pientissimæ voluntati obsecuta societas perficiendo huic templo metropolitano constituta F. C. Pio P. IX. Pontifice Romano Paulo Melchers Archiep. Coloniensi, A.D. MDCCCLXXIV.

"William, the august Emperor of Germany and King of Prussia, in pious memory of divine help received in carrying on and most happily terminating the latest war with France, on the German Empire being restored, commanded the captured cannon, weighing 50,000 lbs., to be cast into a bell, which should be hung in this wonderful building, at last near its completion as a House of God. Agreeably to this most pious desire of the victorious prince, the society founded for the completion of this temple had the bell made. Pius IX. being the Roman Pope, Paul Melchers being the Archbishop of Cologne, A.D. 1874."

Over the figure of St. Peter runs the following inscription:

Voce mea cœli populo dum nuntio sortes,
Sursum corda, volant æmula voce sua
Patronus qui voce mea templi atria pandis,
Janitor et cœli limina pande simul!

"When as messenger my voice the people calls,
Their souls ascend, their voices emulous do rise.
Oh, patron! who at my appeal dost ope' this temple's halls,
Fling wide, celestial janitor, the threshold of the skies!"

On the side opposite to that bearing the figure of the "Prince of Apostles" is the German escutcheon, with the following verse:

Die Kaiserglocke heist ich;
Des Kaiser's Ehre preis ich
Auf heil'ger Warte steh' ich,
Dem Deutschen Reich erfleh' ich
Dast Fried und Wehr
Ihm Gott bescheer!

"I'm called the Emp'ror bell;
The Emp'ror's praise I tell.
On holy guard I stand,
And for German land,
Beseech that God may please
To grant it peace and ease!"

In the first inscription the archiepiscopal arms may also be traced, and the mottoes are surrounded with garlands of Gothic arabesque, which have come out well in the casting. The form of the bell is rendered also less bare by projecting parallel rings of metal cast on to it.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF MARY

The sweetest name for woman, sounding
in human ears,
Mother and maid, with grace abounding,
Is thine, Beata.
So Heaven fulfilled its benediction;
But earth endears,
And Calvary crowns thee with affliction;
Commiserata.
On Israel's night, O virgin queenly,
Foretold by seers
Rose a meek star and burned serenely—
Thine, Consecrata.
To thee—so high, with heart so lowly,
And maiden fears—
Came down an angel from the Holy,
O Saluta!
Never was yet, to mortal, greeting
Like that which hears
Thy virgin heart, with wonder beating;
Ah, Consolata!
Born is the king, the superhuman,
Ring out ye spheres!
And hail the long predicted woman,
Bethlehem, Ephrata!
Wake, dreamer—lo! the Jews have crowned Him,
And see the throne
On which their hands have raised and bound Him;

Is this the Christ? gray, ghastly, gory—
Thy Son, thy own? O Dolorosa,
For this came Ave from the Glory,
And Gratiosa!
What is to thine the grief of others?
To hear thy moan
Sad Rama hushed her weeping mothers;
Ah, Desolata!
The sword, with which thy Son was smitten,
O pang unknown!
Pierced through thy soul, as it is written;
Predestinata.
Now, with the mystic spirits seven,
Burns, through all years,
Thy star before His throne in heaven;
Immaculata.
Till earth and Heaven all ties shall sever,
Midst angels' tears,
Of thee shall tongue of mortal never
Say Obsurata.

Rev. W. W. Lord.

A little girl of Alicante strayed away into the mountains on the 18th of January, 1896. After a long, fruitless search she was finally, on the following morning, discovered by her friends at the edge of a precipice. To their great astonishment, instead of finding her dead, as they had feared, they found her well and lively. "Did you not suffer from the severe cold? Were you not frightened?" they asked her. "No," she answered; "a beautiful lady came to me and kept me under her cloak." This strange answer puzzled the hearers, but greater still was their astonishment when the little one, some days after, having entered the church, cried out, on seeing the picture of Our Lady of Mount Carmel: "There is the lady who put me under her cloak!" The little girl repeats this saying every time an image of Our Lady of Mount Carmel is shown to her.—San Juan de la Cruz, 15 March, 1896.

APPARITION

TO

ST. PETER NOLASCO F. O. OF MERCY BARCELONA, SPAIN

1223

The quality of mercy is not strain'd:
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice bless'd:
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.

Shakespeare.

T. PETER, of the noble family of Nolasco, was born in Languedoc, in 1189. At the age of twenty-five he took a vow of chastity, and made over his vast estates to the Church. Some time after, he conceived the idea of establishing an Order for the redemption of captives. The Divine Will was soon manifested. The Blessed Virgin appeared on the same night to Peter, to Raymund of Pennafort, his confessor, and to James, King of Arragon, his ward, and bade them prosecute without fear their holy designs. After great opposition, the Order was solemnly established, and approved by Gregory IX., under the name of Our Lady of Mercy. By the grace of God, and under the protection of His Virgin Mother, the Order spread rapidly, its growth being increased by the charity and piety of its members, who devoted themselves not only to collecting alms for the ransom of the Christians, but even gave themselves up to voluntary slavery to aid the good work. It is to return thanks to God and the Blessed Virgin that a feast was instituted, which was observed in the Order of Mercy, then in Spain and France, and at last extended to the whole Church by Innocent XII., and the 29th of September named as the day on which it is to be observed.

The history of this Apparition is associated with the miraculous Image of Our Blessed Lady in the Puig, whose celebrated shrine stands in the Spanish province of Valencia, between the towns of Murviedro and Valencia. Its origin is as interesting as it is antique. According to traditon, the venerated image of Mary—which is an alto-relievo, not a statue—was wrought by the hands of angels in a portion of the tomb of our Holy Mother; and, even as the Santa Casa of Loreto was miraculously transported by celestial ministry, so the image of Puig was borne by angels from Jerusalem after the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin into heaven.

Puig already possessed a sanctuary of Our Lady at that remote time—a shrine erected by St. Eugene under the direction of St. James, who had predicted the miraculous arrival of the precious image. St. Eugene, the first Bishop of Valencia, received with joy the angels' gift, placing it in the peaceful sanctuary, where it remained until the year 622. Then the priests who watched over the shrine, dreading the Moorish depredation, concealed it under ground, beneath an immense bell. For six centuries it remained in its subterranean hiding place, but in 1223 Our Lady of Puig again miraculously saw the light of day.

When James I., King of Aragon, was captured and taken as a prisoner to Carcassonne, he made a vow that, if released, he would found a religious order for rescuing Christian captives from the hands of infidels. No sooner was he free than he set about fulfilling his promise.

On August 1, 1223, the monarch had a vision, in which the Blessed Virgin ordered him to institute a religious society, to be known as the Order of Mercy for the Redemption of Captives. A similar vision was granted to the King's confessor, St. Raymond of Pennafort, who received the same injunctions; whilst St. Peter Nolasco, then in Barcelona, was even more singularly favored, as his heavenly Visitor particularly specified her Divine Son's desire that the Order should be founded by St. Peter Nolasco, aided by St. Raymond and their royal patron.

The King, rejoiced to find that God visibly approved his pious thought, was now animated with one desire—that of finding the most favorable spot on which to build the first house of the new Order. Again Heaven came to direct his movements,—or, perhaps more correctly, Our Lady of Puig brought him to the place she had chosen. One night his Majesty was astonished at beholding seven brilliant stars, hovering, so to speak, over a tiny hillock, known at Puig by the name of Castillo. Not to the King alone were the stars visible: all the country around witnessed the miracle. James, however, understood the sign: it was clear to him the seven stars were so many guiding spirits, showing him the spot to choose. The following day workmen began to dig away the earth forming the Castillo, and before long a pickax struck upon a metal object: it proved to be a large bell. On being raised, Mary's long-buried image came to view. The miraculous history attached to it was cut, in Gothic characters, on the bell.

An eye-witness of this touching discovery, a priest named Zimenes, from Daroca, related the scene and gave one of the inscriptions found on the bell: "O Holy Mary, pray for us! May your image protect us,—this image which was carved by angels' hands in the stone of your tomb, and carried by them amongst us, where it has been honored by the visit of Apostles. We, your servants, venerate you. May the sound of this bell, which we made in 622, drive far from us all thunder and lightning."

In a "History of Puig," by Guimerano, the same account is given; and likewise by Martin Zimenes in his "Conquest of Spain;" whilst the most precious testimony of all comes from Pope Benedict XII., who, in a papal bull issued in favor of the sanctuary in the year 1407, sets forth that the miraculous tradition attached to the celebrated Shrine was perfectly authenticated, and the circumstances relating to the finding of the image equally true.

Soon a chapel stood on the spot, and the Castillo was put into a state of defence. Heaven had so visibly taken his cause in hand, the King of Aragon deemed the moment come in which

to march to the conquest of Valencia. The Moorish troops numbered more than forty thousand, whilst the King's army scarcely amounted to two thousand five hundred. Zahen, the Moorish King, made a fierce attack on Puig, confiding in the superiority of his numbers; but all his calculations proved vain. The Catholic army, whose only force was fervent prayer, offered in Mary's sanctuary before the attack, came off victorious. In the midst of the bloody struggle St. George, as if to encourage them by his presence, appeared in the heavens on a white horse, his sword drawn and a red cross on his breast. Although the battle-field was covered with the Moorish dead, the Catholic troops lost only three men.

To commemorate this signal victory, the King decreed that a beautiful chapel and spacious monastery should be erected on the spot where Mary's image had been found; and before long the pious monarch brought triumphantly to his Heavenly Protectress the keys of the city of Valencia, of which he had taken possession.

The Madonna of Puig ever showed her powerful protection in favor of the Kings of Spain. Even Pedro the Cruel sought her Shrine; and, after having been miraculously preserved in a violent tempest, he came barefoot before the altar to offer his cordial thanks. Once, on the eve of the Nativity, a pious client of Mary, unjustly a prisoner in a neighboring town, felt his chains suddenly fall, the prison doors open before him; and, once free, he hastened to Puig to thank the Immaculate Virgin, who had so often been invoked by him with confidence, and who had not been deaf to the voice of her child.

During many years the seven stars were frequently seen, at intervals, hovering over the steeple of the church which quickly rose at Puig in honor of Mary; and often the voices of angels were heard joining in the chants of the monks. On Saturdays especially, and after the recitation of the *Salve Regina,* the invisible singers blended their harmonious strains with those of the congregation; and thus the sanctuary came to be called by a name which, translated from the Spanish, means the "Angels' Room."

On one occasion, in 1588, the image of Mary was carried from Puig to Valencia at the express desire of Philip II., for a splendid celebration about to take place in the latter town. During the sixteen days the ceremonies lasted the angel-singers were heard each day, delighting the pious worshipers by the celestial melody of their strains; whilst the seven stars were visible each night, going from the "Angels' Room" to Valencia Cathedral, wherein the miraculous statue had been placed.

When the fête was over, Our Lady of Puig returned to her sanctuary. There she has remained ever since; though the good monks, the guardians of the Shrine, have long ago been dispersed, and their peaceful home laid bare. The splendors of the place are vanished visions, but the piety of Mary's clients has survived the wreck. The sanctuary is now a humble one, wherein are still repeated the holy litanies learned from the lips of angels; whilst a devoted priest watches with jealous care over the miraculous image of Mary, as she clasps the Divine Infant to her breast.

St. Peter, when at Algiers, guaranteed a large ransom for some noble Spanish captives, and wrote to Spain for the sum. The prisoners, however, finding their captivity intolerable, contrived meanwhile to escape. On this, Peter was taken up, scourged as a thief, and put on board a vessel, with orders to bring back from Spain the money promised. The Moorish crew had secret instructions, when at sea, to scuttle Peter's ship, and then to save themselves on board the convoy vessel. They did so, and left Peter without oar or sail in a sinking ship. But the Saint, trusting in God, stood up and, opening his coat to the wind, was carried safely into the harbor of Valencia.

"I, the Lord, have called thee, that thou mightest bring forth the prisoner out of prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house."—Isaias xiii, 7.

St. Peter and his knights were laymen, not priests, and yet they considered the salvation of their neighbor intrusted to them. We can each of us by counsel, by prayer, but above all by good example, assist the salvation of our brethren, and thus secure our own.

MERCY

In his last hour a good man lay alone,
His couch, the naked earth; his pillow, stone.
Thus faithless fortune left him, in the end,
To perish in the dark, without one friend.
Lifting his eyes, in great bewilderment,
He saw seven shining angels o'er him bent;
And with his failing breath he cried, in fear,
"Ye heavenly messengers! what do ye here?"
Each angel in his turn made low reply,
In voices of celestial melody:—
"I was a-hungered, and thou gavest meat;"
"I was athirst, thy draught was passing sweet;"
"And I was naked, and was clothed by thee;"
"A captive, I, when thou didst ransom me;"
"I harborless till I thy harbor found;"
"When I was sick thy mercy knew no bound;"
Then the last whispered, as he bowed his head,
"And thou didst bury me when I was dead."

Now a great glory filled the vault of night,
A still small voice glowed like intensest light;
It seemed to fashion words that were as flame,
One flashed and faded as another came:—
"And lo! as thou hast done it unto these,
So hast thou done it unto Me." At ease
On his cold bed the good man breathed his last:
A bed of roses now, and every blast
Was softer, sweeter than an infant's breath,
For the bright watchers by that bed of death;
And as the spirit left its form of clay,
Seven angels bore it in their arms away.

Charles W. Stoddard.

THE SEVEN CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY.

1. To feed the hungry.
2. To give drink to the thirsty.
3. To clothe the naked.
4. To harbor the harborless.
5. To visit the sick.
6. To visit the imprisoned, and
7. To bury the dead.

APPARITION
TO
ST. RAYMUND NONNATUS O.M.
CATALONIA, SPAIN

1224

How can I draw more near to Him
Than thro' this one so dear to Him?
For if I call sweet Mary "Mother,"
As He did, am I not His brother?

Charles H. Towne.

ST. RAYMUND NONNATUS was born in Catalonia, in the year 1204, and was descended of a noble family. In his childhood he seemed to find pleasure only in his devotions and serious duties. His father, perceiving in him an inclination to a religious state, took him from school, and sent him to take care of a farm which he had in the country. Raymund readily obeyed and, in order to enjoy the opportunity of holy solitude, kept the sheep himself, and spent his time in the mountains and forests in holy meditation and prayer. Some time after, he joined the new Order of Our Lady of Mercy for the redemption of captives, and was admitted to his profession at Barcelona by the holy founder, St. Peter Nolasco.

It is related in the annals of his Order that Our Blessed Lady appeared to him and told him to join the Order of Mercy for the redemption of captives from slavery.

Then, two years after his profession, he was sent into Barbary with a large sum of money, where he purchased the liberty of a great number of slaves. When all this money was exhausted, he gave himself up as a hostage for the ransom of certain others. This generous sacrifice served only to exasperate the Mohammedans, who treated him with great

barbarity, till fearing lest if he died in their hands they should lose the ransom which was to be paid for the slaves for whom he remained a hostage, they gave order that he should be treated with more humanity. He was then permitted to go about the streets, which liberty he made use of to comfort and encourage the Christians in their chains, and he converted and baptized some Mohammedans. For this the governor condemned him to be put to death by thrusting a stake into the body, but his punishment was commuted, and he underwent a cruel bastinado. This torment did not daunt his courage. So long as he saw souls in danger of perishing eternally, he thought he had yet done nothing. St. Raymund had no more money to employ in releasing poor captives, and to speak to a Mohammedan on the subject of religion was death. He could, however, still exert his endeavors, with hopes of some success, or of dying a martyr of charity. He therefore resumed his former method of instructing both the Christians and the infidels. The governor, who was enraged, ordered the Saint to be cruelly tortured and imprisoned till his ransom was brought by some religious men of his Order, who were sent with it by St. Peter Nolasco. Upon his return to Spain, he was nominated cardinal by Pope Gregory IX., and the Pope being desirous to have so holy a man about his person, called him to Rome. The Saint obeyed, but went no further than Cardona, when he was seized with a violent fever, which proved fatal. He died on the 31st of August, in the year 1240, the thirty-seventh year of his age. It is related in the Annals of his Order that he had a vision of Our Blessed Lord at the hour of his death, and that Our Lord anointed him.

Raymund of Pennafort was born A. D. 1175, of a Spanish noble family. At the age of twenty he taught philosophy at Barcelona with great success. Ten years later his rare abilities won for him the degree of Doctor in the University of Bologna and many high dignities. A tender devotion to Our Blessed Lady, which had grown up with him from childhood, determined him in middle life to renounce all his honors, and to enter the Order of St. Dominic. There again a vision of the

Mother of Mercy instructed him to co-operate with his penitent St. Peter Nolasco, and with James, King of Aragon, in founding the Order of Our Lady of Ransom for the Redemption of Captives. He began this great work by preaching a crusade against the Moors, and rousing to penance the Christians, enslaved in both soul and body by the infidel. King James of Aragon, a man of great qualities, but held in bond by a ruling passion, was bidden by the Saint to put away the cause of his sin. On his delay, Raymund asked for leave to depart from Majorca, since he could not live with sin. The King refused, and forbade, under pain of death, his conveyance by others. Full of faith, Raymund spread his cloak upon the waters, and tying one end to his staff as a sail, made the sign of the Cross and fearlessly stepped upon it. In six hours he was borne to Barcelona, where, gathering up his cloak, dry, he went into his monastery. The King, overcome by this miracle, became a sincere penitent and a disciple of the Saint till his death. In 1230 Gregory IX. summoned Raymund to Rome, and made him his confessor and grand penitentiary, and directed him to compile "the Decretals," a collection of the scattered decisions of the Popes and Councils. Having refused the Archbishopric of Tarragona, Raymund was chosen, in 1238, General of his Order, which post he resigned soon after to resume his labors among the infidels and, in 1256, being then eighty-one, was able to report that ten thousand Saracens had received baptism. He died A. D. 1275.

DEATH OF ST. RAYMUND

The blessed Raymund, named the Unshorn,
Left Barcelona one sunbright morn,—
Left far behind him the city towers,
His well-loved convent and orange bowers;
And Romeward journeyed by the decree
Of him who ruled in St. Peter's See.
But when the sun had twice rose and set
In clouds of vermeil and violet,

He at the Count of Cerdagne's door
Craved for admittance in sickness sore.
There labored heart-beat and failing breath
Betokened to him approaching death;
And begged he loudly, with sob and tear,
For Shrift and Housel,—no priest was near.
But to Christ he pleaded, and oft he prayed
To Christ's dear Mother for help and aid,
Till they who watched by his dying bed
Looked to the doorway in awe and dread.
With noiseless footsteps, that portal through
Came a radiant company, two and two.
Like Raymund's robes were their robes of white,
And each one carried a taper bright;
Their voices sounded in chant and prayer,—
No voice on earth might with theirs compare.
They ranged themselves from the sick man's side
In two white lines to the doorway wide,
And One passed through them of aspect sweet,
With bleeding wounds in His hands and feet;
And shrift and Housel, old legends say,
Had Raymund from Him upon that day.
Then the white-robed company as before,
Passed noiseless through the open door,
And they who watched by that dying bed
To Raymund turned in their fear and dread;
But no words of his might their tears allay:
His soul had burst from its house of clay.

Magdalen Rock.

APPARITION
TO
THE SEVEN SERVITES
FLORENCE, ITALY
1233

Mother of Sorrow, Mother of Joy,
Virgin untainted by sin's alloy;
Eternal guard of the heavenly gate,
Mary our Queen Immaculate.

P. T. O'Reilly.

THE Order of Servites, or Servants of Mary, is an order of friars, who follow the rule of Saint Augustine. It was instituted in Italy in the thirteenth century by seven rich men of Florence, and has for its special object meditation on the Dolors of the Most Holy Virgin, that its members may feel and share them with her, and propagate this devotion among the faithful.

The coming of the Friars marks the very heart of the Middle Ages. St. Dominic was born in 1170, St. Francis in 1182, St. Bonfilius, the eldest of the Servites, in 1198; and the special task of each of the three Orders was closely allied to those of the others. St. Dominic took the doctrine of Christ as his charge, to preach it everywhere, and set it forth in all its splendor; St. Francis embraced Christian morality, to practice it in all its heroism, and show the inexpressible sweetness which underlay its most austere observances. The Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order, like loving and tender children, devoted themselves to her who had borne Christ Himself in her immaculate bosom, Christ, source of all truth and principle of all good; to her, the inseparable coadjutrix of Jesus in the redemption of souls; to her who gave to the world the Word full of grace and truth, the Saviour sacrificed in His infinite love for the salvation and the blessing of all men.

Thus while St. Dominic and St. Francis manifested Christ to those eager to know and to love Him, the seven Saints of Florence showed forth the sweet and radiant face of the Virgin, the Mother who from Bethlehem to Calvary encircles with the aureole of her love Him who wrought the glory of God, who is the Conqueror of souls.

Innocent III. was in the chair of St. Peter, keeping a brave heart among the many distractions of the Christian world. Germany was a prey to civil war between the Emperor Otho IV. and Philip of Swabia; France was under the glorious rule of Philip Augustus, who, having returned from the third Crusade, conquered Normandy, Maine, Anjou and Poitou, but showed himself a true son of the Church in submitting wholly to Innocent in the question of his marriage, having wished to repudiate his wife Ingeburge. Not so John in England, more disloyal to the Holy See than any King of England, till he arose who brought about the great apostacy. Spain was in the agony of the Mohammedan invasion. In the East, Jerusalem had again fallen into the power of the Infidel, and the Pope incited and arranged the fourth Crusade. But the Eastern Empire alone fell, and the Holy Places were not freed.

Coming nearer to his own realm, the Pope looked out on a stormy and distracted land. Except the States of the Church and the kingdom of Sicily, then under a Regency, all the important towns were at strife with their neighbors, either forming round them independent communes, or becoming the centers of small republics. They lived in a state of perpetual feud, happy only if they had peace within their own borders, as Florence had for the moment. Later, in Dante's time, who probably knew some of the early Servite Saints, there were no less than seven intrenched camps belonging to different factions within the City of Florence itself. Though of course politically divided by the two great parties, the Guelfs and the Ghibellines, their dissensions were but political; war with those without had not become civil war.

The Church and the offices of religion constituted the whirlwind's heart of peace, and the many confraternities to which

pious laymen belonged, brought men together, who would not otherwise have known each other, of all opinions and all stations. In them, Guelf and Ghibelline, merchant and prince, met on an equal footing. Such a Confraternity was that of the "Laudesi," or the Elder Society of Our Blessed Lady, founded in the year 1183. It was, in fact, just such a confraternity or sodality as we now know, mainly in connection with Jesuit churches, and under one of the titles of Our Lady. It was composed of the nobles and merchants of Florence, and met at the church of Santa Reparata. In the year 1233, just fifty years after its foundation, it numbered two hundred members, all of the best families in Florence, and was under the direction of a young priest, James of Poggibonsi.

Of these two hundred members, seven became the saintly founders of the Servite Order, and the Confraternity of the Laudesi was, in the good providence of God, to serve as their noviciate.

Bonfilius Monaldi was the eldest. He was born in 1198, the year of the election of Innocent III. The Monaldeschi, for such was the original name, were of French extraction, related to the royal House of Anjou. What may have been his occupation in the world is not known, but he was noted as being a young man of prayerful and ascetic life, who took the lead among his friends in all exercises of piety, so that, as soon as there was question among them of community life, they turned to him as their natural superior. He retained in religion his baptismal name.

Alexis Falconieri was born in 1200, of a noble family, originally of Fiesole, but long settled in Florence. He was the eldest son of Bernard Falconieri, a knight, and one of the merchant princes who created the greatness of his native city. The family were all strong adherents of the Pope, and opponents of the Emperor, in their unhappy quarrels. He made his course at the University, studying what were then known as the Humanities, Latin and Greek, the usual classical course, as well as belles lettres, with great success; but he was marked as espe-

cially prayerful, fond of reading religious books, and avoiding general society. At an early age he vowed himself to celibacy long before he knew what outward form his life would take. He never became a priest, but remained all his life Brother Alexis, he also keeping his own name.

Benedict de l'Antella was born in 1203, of a wealthy family, of foreign, perhaps German, or, as some think, Eastern extraction, who, long settled at Antella, had but recently come into Florence and become bankers. Benedict was extremely well educated, of very remarkable beauty, and called on by his position to mix much in society. He was afterwards known in religion as Father Manettus.

Bartholomew Amidei was born in 1204, of one of the oldest, richest, and most powerful families of the city. He claimed to be ancient Roman by origin. The Amidei were Ghibellines, and that Bartholomew received a most Christian education is among the many proofs that the bitter political strifes of the age were merely political, and hindered neither side from being good Catholics. His family, who lived much in the world, allowed him to follow a secluded and religious life, which found its natural development in a religious Order. He took in religion his family, rather than his baptismal, name.

Ricovero Uguccioni was born in the same year as Amidei, of a family both noble and mercantile. The lad was from a very early age remarkable for obedience, compassion for the poor, and love of solitude; he was devoted to pious reading, yet none the less was a leader among his young companions who looked to him in all things. In religion he was known as Hugh.

Gherardino Sostegni was born in 1205, of good family, but beyond this little is known of his worldly state. In religion he bore his family name Sostegni.

John Manetti was born in 1206; of the higher ranks of the Florentine aristocracy, both in birth and riches. In religion he was afterwards known as Fr. Buonagiunta, or Bienvenu.

Of these seven the eldest was thirty-four, the youngest about twenty-seven, when their great change in life came to them. They lived in various quarters of the city, they held divers

views on politics, their one bond of union was the Confraternity of Our Lady, though some among them knew one or two others with more or less intimacy. Monaldi, Amidei, Sostegni and Manetti were married, but Monaldi and perhaps another had already become widowers. Alexis Falconieri alone had, as has been said, taken a vow, but Antella and Uguccioni showed plainly to their families that their wishes tended in the same direction. There were many reasons why even those who sought after perfection should in Italy, and at that time, enter into the marriage state. The Cathari, a sect of heretics who had great success in Florence, made light of marriage, and under pretence of purity were grossly immoral. It was as necessary to uphold true purity by affording examples of holy married life, as of celibacy. But whether married, widowed, or single, these seven were especially eager after a life of perfection, in which they were aided, and to which they were stimulated, by their director.

No new development in the Church of God is sudden; and it had come to pass that Gregory IX. in his pontificate gave special favor to two devotions, afterwards to be so closely associated with the servants of Mary. These were the Angelus and the Salve Regina. In 1230 Ardingo de Forasboschi became Bishop of Florence, himself a native of the city, and belonging to one of the great Guelf families. Both on religious and on social grounds he had especial affection to the Laudesi, and its members.

On the Feast of the Assumption, August 15, 1233, these seven young men, with other members of the Laudesi, having confessed and communicated, were each and all making their thanksgiving after Mass. Each, unknown to those about them, fell into an ecstasy. Each seemed to himself surrounded by supernatural light, in the midst of which Our Lady appeared to them accompanied by angels, who spoke to each of them the words: "Leave the world, retire together into solitude, that you may fight against yourselves, and live wholly for God. You will thus experience heavenly consolations. My protection and assistance will never fail you."

The vision faded, the congregation dispersed, only the Seven remained, each meditating what the vision might mean. Bonfilius Monaldi, as the eldest, did violence to his humility and broke the silence. He told what had befallen him, and that he was ready to obey Our Lady's call. Each in order recounted the same experiences, and the same resolve.

As Monaldi had been the first to speak, so the little band at once decided that he must be the first to act; they looked to him for guidance. He decided to seek counsel of their director, James of Poggibonsi, who concluded that was no mere fancy of pious youths, but a fact, a call from their Mother, manifesting to them the will of God, to be obeyed without hesitation. Some were engaged in business, some in offices of state, four had family ties, which it was not easy to break, especially since the Church suffers no married man or woman to enter into religion unless the other party to the marriage contract does so too. It is believed that the two wives who still lived became afterwards Tertiaries of the Order; at any rate the conditions were at the time fulfilled, all social and worldly arrangements were made; and by the eighth of September, the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, they were free to obey, they had stripped themselves of all that bound them to the world.

Meantime, and while waiting to know the further will of God, Monaldi and their director sketched out a plan of community life. They adopted a habit of grey wool, with a leathern cincture, and found a house just outside the city walls, where they might pass much of their time in solitude and prayer, yet near enough to the city to give an example to those they had so lately left. All this was done with the approval of the Bishop; although there was as yet no notion of a new Order; it was merely a question of certain men living a mortified life in community; he granted permission to James to live with them as their chaplain, to celebrate Mass in their oratory, and to reserve the Blessed Sacrament.

So soon as their life arranged itself, and Monaldi was formally elected as their Superior, they desired to submit themselves to the Bishop for his blessing. He wished to see the

whole Brotherhood. Their entry into Florence was a strange contrast to what they had seemed a few days before, a band of rich young men in all the splendor of the dress of those days. Their appearance drew a crowd of sympathizers, of men indifferent and curious, of former companions, and of some who, recognizing their great renunciation and sancity, pressed to touch their garments, to kiss their hands and entreat their blessing.

Suddenly, from the midst of the crowd, were heard the voices of children who cried: "Ecco, ecco, i Servi di Maria:" "See, the Servants of Mary." The same exclamation was made still more wonderfully on the following thirteenth of January, when, as two of the brethren, Falconieri and Manetti, were asking charity in the city, again infants in arms gave them their title. One of these children was Philip Benizi, afterwards to be one of the greatest Saints of the Order and its General. He was then only five months old, and spoke for the first time in crying "Mother, those are Mary's Servants, give them an alms." They had by this time, with the approbation of their Bishop, entered on a community life of mendicancy, devoting themselves especially to Our Lady, to whose honor they reserved Saturday in each week. The habitation without the city walls which had seemed to them at first so solitary, and so fitted for an eremitical life became soon thronged by troops of citizens, curious to see the recipients of so great favors; and they therefore began to say among themselves that they were not wholly obedient to the voice which had said as plainly as to the disciples of old "Come ye apart into a desert place, and rest awhile."

There is a windy mountain ten miles to the north of Florence, a spur of the Apennines, lonely and savage; this again was manifested to each of them in a vision as the place of their future abode; while at the same time a voice, sweet and sonorous, distinct yet mysterious, told them that this mountain was called Monte Senario, that on its height they were to dwell, and apply themselves to yet greater austerity; that in this more

rigorous and secluded life they might count always on the favor and succor of the Mother of God.

Monte Senario was part of the episcopal domain of Florence, and the Bishop willingly granted to the solitaries the territory whereon they desired to settle. They went without delay from the house wherein they had rested nine months. At dawn of day, after receiving Holy Communion from their director, they skirted the walls of Florence in procession, carrying the Cross before them, and the image of the Blessed Virgin which had stood in their oratory. They climbed the mountain fasting, for it was the vigil of the Ascension; they grounded the Cross, and set down the statue of Our Lady to make their evening prayer, unconscious where they could lay their heads, or even if and how their might raise a shelter for the Blessed Sacrament after the Feast of the morrow. They succeeded, however, in building a small shelter of boughs as a chapel, and so passed the last day of May, 1234. Their simple monastery, or rather hermitage, was built before the end of the same year; they dwelling till then in caves and crevices of the rocks.

In this monastery they followed a mixture of hermit and community life, broken only by visits of two of their number each week to Florence in quest of alms, and by the acquisition of a small house of refuge in which they might shelter if fatigue or nightfall rendered it impossible for them to regain Monte Senario. Their lives were one unceasing round of austerity and devotion, but their future was still uncertain; they had not ventured to form themselves into a religious Order, though encouraged to do so by their Bishop. They waited and prayed, and in their perplexity they asked a sign. It was given them somewhat as one was given to the Prophet Jonas when his gourd grew up in a night.

Just below the crest of the mountain to the south, where there was some depth of richer soil, the hermits had planted a vine. On the 3rd Sunday in Lent, February 27, 1239, the brethren saw their vine clothed with green leaves and clusters of ripe grapes. All around smiled the verdure of spring, and

the scent of flowers filled the air. They dared not interpret the prodigy. The superior despatched one of the community to tell to the Bishop the amazing news, and beg that he would give them counsel, for not only was he a man of most holy life, but one to whom also supernatural communication had already been vouchsafed.

To him in a dream heaven revealed the interpretation of the prodigy. The seven hermits were seven branches of the mystic vine, the clusters were those who should join themselves to the Order; the Brethren were again, though as Religious, to mingle in the world. As always they obeyed the divine voice, however given; Easter was near at hand, when they would open their ranks to those who came, till then they would give themselves to earnest prayer.

On Good Friday, April 13, 1240, which that year coincided with the Feast of the Annunciation, all for which the Seven Holy Founders had been preparing found its explanation. On the evening of that day, in their oratory, Our Lady once more appeared to them in a vision, surrounded by angels who bore in their hands religious habits of black, a book containing the Rule of St. Augustine, the title Servants of Mary written in letters of gold, and a palm branch. Then holding in her own hands the habit with which she seemed to clothe each of them; she said: "I come, Servants well beloved and elect, I come to accomplish your desires and grant your prayers; here are the habits in which I wish you should in future be clothed; their black hue should always bring to mind the cruel Dolors which I felt by reason of the Crucifixion and Death of my only Son; the Rule of St. Augustine, which I give you as the form of your religious life, will gain for you the palm prepared in heaven, if you serve me faithfully on earth." The vision vanished, and the foundation of the Servite Order was definitely accomplished.

But this was not all. Our Lady at the same hour appeared to the Bishop of Florence, and made to him the same communication. He gladly went to Monte Senario for their clothing, and erected them so far as rested with him, into

a formal Order, giving them their religious names, and allowing them to admit new members. Of these their Director, James of Poggibonsi, was the first. The Bishop also urged on the Seven to prepare for ordination, wherein all obeyed, Alexis Falconieri only excepted. Nothing could overcome the great humility in which he desired to remain Brother Alexis.

It were long to tell how, when the news of the vision went abroad, and the affluence of new members was known, other towns in North Italy desired to receive, and received, homes of the nascent Order, and of the new and special practices which distinguished them from others. Immediately—and to this day the practice remains—they began their Mass with Ave Maria, and ended it with Salve Regina, adding other devotions also to Our Lady of Dolors, who under that title had given herself as their special patron. Blessed Bonfilius established also the Third Order, and the Society of the Black Scapular, both of these as well as the Devotions seeming to appeal to the hearts and satisfying the needs of the time, and all things seemed to promise prosperity. But the Founders had to share in the dolors of their mother, and the time of peace was not yet.

Gregory IX. died in August, 1241, without having formally confirmed the Order, and his successor Celestine IV., who had for the Servites great esteem and affection, who had also visited them at Monte Senario, only lived a fortnight after his election. The See remained vacant for nearly two years, till Innocent IV. was elected in June, 1243. One of his earliest acts was to send Peter of Verona, a Dominican, afterwards known as St. Peter Martyr, as Inquisitor to Northern Italy, with a view to putting down the heresy of the Cathari, and incidentally to enquire into the life of the Religious of Monte Senario.

Peter of Verona conversed with Monaldi and Falconieri, and then prayed earnestly. He was answered by a vision in which Our Lady appeared to him, covered with a black mantle under which she sheltered religious in the same habit, and in

the company were those with whom he had spoken. Then he beheld angels gathering lilies, and among them were seven of surpassing whiteness, which Our Lady accepted, and placed in her bosom. The Saint was convinced that the Order was of God, and after visiting Monte Senario reported favorably to the Pope.

This is no place to speak of the favors heaped on the Fathers by various Popes, nor the difficulties which cast shadows on their way, of their missionary efforts, nor the spread of the Order into other lands, even in the life time of the Founders. To do so would be to write the history of the Order, and far exceed our limit. We can but say a few words on their edifying lives, their holy deaths.

St. Bonfilius ruled the community till 1255, when after repeated endeavors, he succeeded in laying down his office, and the choice of the Fathers fell on St. Bonagiunta. Miracle had again marked him out as chosen of God. A merchant in the town, wearied by the Saint's exhortions to virtue, under pretence of aiding the needs of the convent, offered bread and wine, into which he had introduced poison, for the special use of Fr. Bonagiunta. The Saint partook of the food without hurt, then, suspecting evil, he made over it the sign of the Cross; the wine flask burst into shards, the bread was in an instant full of worms; and the terrified servant who had, unwittingly, brought the gift, returned to find his master sick unto death.

St. Bonagiunta was the first to pass away. Worn with travel, always on foot, for the good of his Order, and the conversion of heretics, he felt his end approaching. On the last day of August, 1257, he said Mass with extraordinary devotion, and, calling his brethren together, spoke in prophetic words, of trouble which was soon to fall on the Order; and then set himself to meditate aloud on the Passion. When he came to the words 'In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum—Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit," he extended his arms in the form of a cross and fell

forward against the altar. His brethren, among whom was St. Philip Benizi, at his wish, supported him in that position, and so kneelng at the tabernacle of his Lord, he breathed forth his soul.

St. Bonfilius was the next to hear his Master's call. He was Vicar General in the absence of the third General in Germany and in France. He too retired to Monte Senario, and died on January 1, 1262, "less of any definite disease than of those heavenly flames which burnt up his heart." He and those around him were consoled by special revelations from Her whose faithful servant he had been.

Three years later came the turn of St. Amideus. For a year he had felt his force failing, and had remained at Monte Senario. He led a hermit life, constantly remaining whole hours alone in his grotto. Alone he died on the third Sunday after Easter, April 18, 1265. His death was made known to his brethren by a wondrous sign. A tongue of fire shot from Monte Senario to heaven, while a sweet odor filled the whole convent: the Fathers did not doubt that, under this sign of flame, his heart, which had burnt with so vehement love, went to God. He was succeeded by Fr. Manetti as General, and he in his turn by the young Philip Benizi, into whose hands when he had committed his charge, St. Manetti also retired to Monte Senario, and died in St. Philip's arms.

The three brave men who were left spared no fatigue. One, St. Alexis continued his hard life as a lay brother, two in spite of advancing years wore themselves with missionary labors in foreign lands with their new General St. Philip. In the spring of 1282, SS. Hugh and Sosthenes returned to Monte Senario. And as they went they spoke of all that their Lady had done for them, of the spread of the Order, of the deaths of those who had gone before. Raising their eyes to heaven, they desired that they also might be removed from this valley of tears and united to their Sovereign Good. Then they heard a voice which said: "Fear not, ye men of God, your consolation is at hand." And once on their arrival they were stricken with fever, and died at the same hour on May 3, 1282.

St. Philip Benizi was at that time in Florence, and, praying, he fell into a trance. He saw on Monte Senario, two angels pluck each a lily of perfect whiteness, and present them to Our Lady. He called his brethren around him, and knowing well what the vision meant, announced to them the deaths of the two holy Founders.

Not till 1310 was St. Alexis called away. In his last years it was only in virtue of holy obedience that he allowed himself to lie on a couch of straw, and to relax his rule of rigid abstinence. When he knew that this hour was come he called his brethren around him, and recited one hundred Aves, during which the angels circled around him in the form of doves. As he recited the last Ave he saw our Lord approach, and crown him with sweet flowers. He cried: "Kneel my Brothers, see ye not Jesus Christ, your loving Lord and mine, who crowns me with a garland of beauteous flowers? Worship Him and adore. He will crown you also in the same manner, if, full of devotion to the holy Virgin, you imitate her immaculate purity, her profound humility."

So closed the life story of the Seven Founders, who, during the time they spent on earth, did all that in them lay to hide their merits under the veil of profound humility. Their sanctity was attested, not only by their heroic virtues, as they came to light, and by the miracles which accompanied them in their career, and illuminated their deaths, but also by a whole generation of saints, who arose on their traces, and became, as it were, their guard of honor.

Foremost of these was St. Philip Benizi, whom we have so often named, whose life merits a separate essay. He was the most brilliant disciple of the Seven Founders, and did honor to his masters by his work and sanctity. Indeed, so great was the renown of his virtue, that he seemed even to cast into the shade the heroism of those who formed his character, as he is their abiding honor. No other ever reflected their spirit more faithfully, seized their thought more accurately, carried out their designs with such fidelity. Philip

made a saint by saints, was in his turn the father of saints, of whom SS. Peregrine Laziosi and Juliana Falconieri, foundress of the Mantellate or Servite nuns, are the best known.

The spread of the Order in its early days was remarkable, and it was soon divided into six provinces, containing about one hundred convents, four provinces in Italy, one consisting of Germany, one of France. Only in these later days has the order spread to England and to America, where to it, as to the Catholic Church in general, a vast field seems opening.

More than four hundred years passed away after the death of St. Alexis during which the Order had its vicissitudes, its triumphs of grace, its dangers, alternations of honor and scorn. But in the course of the year 1752, the Seven Holy Fathers were solemnly declared Blessed, in 1888 they were canonized. Lovely and pleasant in their lives, in death they were not divided; their invocation is collective, none in the Sacred Order is greater or less than another; the miracles necessary to their canonization were not wrought in connection with this or that one amongst them; all together continue the work they began in common.

STABAT MATER.

In the shadow of the rood,
Broken-hearted there she stood
  Near her Son and Lord:
While her soul, His doom lamenting,
Yet in sacrifice consenting,
  Felt the cleaving sword.

Came there ever to another
Grief like thine, O wounded Mother,
  As thou looked'st upon
Him, the Son of God, all holy,
And of thee, a Virgin lowly,
  Sole-begotten Son?

Who so lost to human feeling
As to hide his tears revealing
Sympathy with thine?
Who that e'er was born of woman,
In a tenderness so human
Sees not love Divine?

To the lash, for sin atoning,
Lo! He bows! and thou, O moaning
Mother, now must see
Limb from limb His spirit languish,
And His latest look of anguish
Turned in love to thee!

Let me near the fountain growing
Of thy tenderness o'erflowing,
Drink my fill thereof;
Let the fervid flames illuming
All thy soul, a fire consuming,
Kindle mine to love.

Thou alone no ransom needing,
Let thy Son, the Victim bleeding
For my sin atone:
What for me my God and Brother
Deigns to bear, O sinless Mother,
Learn not thou alone.

One with thee thy vigil keeping,
One with thee, the Mourner, weeping
Near His sacred side,
Where thy soul in desolation
Waits of woe the consummation,
Let my soul abide.

Virgin, Earth's divinest blossom,
Spurn not from thy fragrant bosom
Dews that fall for thee!
Make me near thy Son remaining,
Simon-like, His cross sustaining,
One in sympathy!

Let me from His life-distilling
Wounds, mine empty chalice filling,
Quaff the crimson wine.
Lest the flames, devouring end me,
In thy chastity defend me
From the wrath Divine.

Lord, through her who brought Thee hither,
Let me, hence departing whither
  Thou the way hast found,
Come, through Death's opposing portal,
To the Victor's palm immortal,
  With Thy glory crowned.

Rev. John B. Tabb.

SHRINE
OF
ST. ROSE OF VITERBO, V.O.S.F.
VITERBO, ITALY

1250

Mother! that moon beneath thy tread
Thy scorn of earth to memory brings;
That crown of stars above thy head,
Thy love of great, eternal things.
Whilst we, alas! love things that fleet,
Our noble souls to earth bowed down;
The shining stars beneath our feet,
The pale-faced, changing moon our crown.

Ave Maria.

ROSE was born in 1240, a time when Frederick II. was oppressing the Church, and many were faithless to the Holy See. The infant at once seemed filled with grace; with tottering steps she sought Jesus in His tabernacle, she knelt before sacred images, she listened to pious talk, retaining all she heard, and this when scarcely three years old. One coarse habit covered her flesh; fasts and disciplines were her delight. To defend the Church's rights was her burning wish, and for this she received her mission from the blessed Mother of God, who gave her the Franciscan habit, with the command to go forth and preach. When hardly ten years old, Rose went down to the public square at Viterbo, called upon the inhabitants to be faithful to the Sovereign Pontiff, and vehemently denounced all his opponents. So great was the power of her words, and of the miracles which accompanied it, that the Imperial party, in fear and anger, drove her from the city. Exile only opened a wider sphere for her zeal, and she continued to preach incessantly from place to place, till Innocent IV. was brought back in triumph to Rome, and the cause of God was won.

Then she retired to a little cell at Viterbo, and prepared in solitude for her end. She died in her eighteenth year. Not long after she appeared in glory to Alexander IV., and bade him translate her body. He found it as the vision had said, but fragrant and beautiful, as if still in life.

TO-DAY

Dignare, Domine, die isto, Sine peccate, nos custodire

Lord, for to-morrow and its needs
I do not pray;
Keep me, my God, from stain of sin,
Just for to-day.
Let me both diligently work
And duly pray;
Let me be kind in word and deed,
Just for to-day.
Let me be slow to do my will,
Prompt to obey;
Help me to mortify my flesh,
Just for to-day.
Let me no wrong or idle word
Unthinking say:
Set Thou a seal upon my lips,
Just for to-day.
Let me in season, Lord, be grave,
In season gay;
Let me be faithful to Thy grace,
Just for to-day.
And if to-day my tide of life
Should ebb away,
Give me Thy sacraments divine,
Sweet Lord, to-day.
In Purgatory's cleansing fires
Brief be my stay;
O bid me, if to-day I die,
Come home to-day.
So, for to-morrow and its needs
I do not pray;
But guide me, guard me, keep me, Lord,
Just for to-day.

USE OF THE PRESENT TIME

St. Rose lived but eighteen years, saved the Church's cause, and died a Saint. We have lived, perhaps, much longer, and yet with what result? Every minute something can be done for God. Let us be up and doing.

If God gives us a particular work to do, He will most certainly enable us to accomplish it, however unsuitable the time and circumstances may appear. One day, when Rose was insisting, in the square of Viterbo, on the duty of being loyal Catholics, the crowd became so great that but few could hear her words. Still she preached on, and gradually the stone on which she was standing rose from the ground, and remaining suspended in the air, supported the holy child in view of all till her discourse was finished, when it gently descended to the ground.

"To-morrow never becomes to-day, nor does presently become now. Through this evil custom of saying 'to-morrow,' 'presently,' each 'to-day' and each 'now,' when present, brings forth a new 'to-morrow' and another 'presently.' "—*F. Scupoli.*

"Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold now is the day of salvation."—2 Cor. vi., 2.

ACT OF REPARATION TO JESUS IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT

I adore Thee! I bless Thee! I love Thee! O Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar. I offer, through the Immaculate Heart of Thy holy Mother, the Sacred Hosts reposing in our tabernacles to atone for all the sacrileges, impieties, profanations, and other crimes by which Thou, O most loving Heart! art outraged throughout the universe.

300 *days' Indulgence.*

APPARITION TO
ST. SIMON STOCK
CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND

APPARITION
TO
ST. SIMON STOCK
CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND

1251

Carmel's fair Flower!
Rod blossom-laden
Smile on thy Dower,
Meek Mother-Maiden!
None equals thee.

Grant us a sign
Thou dost protect us,
Mark us for thine;
Shine and direct us,
Star of the Sea!

St. Simon Stock.

THE object which I propose to myself in the present paper is to give a brief account of the origin, the graces, and the indulgences of the Brown Scapular only, with the conditions upon which these spiritual favors may be gained. Since the introduction of this Scapular into general use among the faithful, so many questions have been proposed to the Sacred Congregation of Rites or to the Superior-General of the Carmelites relating to it, that it is very difficult for everyone to know what precisely is necessary to be done in order to reap all the spiritual advantages which the Church in her liberality has granted to the devout wearers of this livery of Mary. Some persons may do more than is absolutely necessary, while others may do less; and while the one errs by imposing unnecessary obligations upon himself, the other commits a more fatal mistake in failing to fulfil what is prescribed, and hence reaps no advantage. Another difficulty which priests too often meet with in propagating devotions of this kind is that in almost

every congregation one or more devout persons are found who are looked upon by others as authorities in matters relating to the devotions which all pious Catholics are accustomed to practise, whether such persons are learned or not; and here as elsewhere it generally turns out that a little learning is a bad thing. Such pious souls being anxious to extend the devotions to which they are particularly attached, will recommend them to others; and, either from the very excess of their unenlightened piety, or from the desire of making the gaining of the indulgences doubly sure, are not unfrequently prompted to make unwarranted additions to the conditions which the Church has laid down for the acquiring of these spiritual treasures, or to interpret them more strictly than the letter of the grant warrants; which amounts to the same thing. And, to increase the difficulty, it will generally be found that people will take the words of these persons in preference to that of the priest; at least such has been my experience. It is much to be desired that these pious souls were either more enlightened or more diffident.

We owe the Scapular to the direct intervention of the Holy Mother of God, who in this new proof of her love for man chose St. Simon Stock as her instrument. This devout servant of Mary was a native of England, who had attached himself to the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel soon after its introduction into his native land, had made such progress in the science of the saints, and had displayed such prudence, that he was ere long elected Superior-General of the Carmelites of the West. The Scapular was revealed to him in a celebrated vision with which the Mother of God favored him on the 16th of July, in the year 1251, at Cambridge. Holding the Scapular in her hand, she said: "Receive, my beloved son, this Scapular of thy Order; it is the special sign of my favor, which I have obtained for thee and for thy children of Mount Carmel. He who dies clothed with this habit shall be preserved from eternal fire. It is the badge of salvation, a shield in time of danger, and a pledge of special peace and protection." This address of the Mother of God is given in different words by

different writers, but all are substantially the same. The vision has been called in question by certain writers; but when I state that it has been confirmed by many well-authenticated miracles; that Pope Benedict XIV., among others, accepted it as genuine, and that the indulgences granted by several Sovereign Pontiffs also suppose its genuineness, there is little room for further question.

I shall not pause to inquire into the manner in which this devotion became, in the course of a very short time, extended not only to the members of the Order to which it was granted, but also to such of the faithful as wished to place themselves under the special protection of the august Mother of God. Nor shall I adduce any of the miracles by which it pleased Almighty God from time to time to confirm the belief of the faithful in the promises of the Mother of His Divine Son. We shall turn rather to the various questions that have arisen in connection with this devotion, in the discussion of which it is to be hoped will be found all the information necessary for those who wish to wear the Scapular with profit, or whose zeal may prompt them to recommend it to others.*

The word *scapular* is derived from the Latin, and means the shoulder-blade, or in the plural, in which it is more commonly found, the shoulders. As a garment, it is a broad piece of cloth, with an aperture in it for the head, which hangs down in front and at the back almost to the ground, as may be seen in the habits of the Carmelites, the Benedictines, and some other religious orders. The Scapular worn by the faithful is but a symbol of that worn by the religious of the Order of Mount Carmel. In form it must consist of two parts, each oblong or square, in accordance with the custom that has long been observed, fastened together with two strings, so that one part may hang on the breast and the other on the back. When

*The sources from which I have mainly drawn my information are the most reliable: the Decrees of the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences and Holy Relics, lately published by the special order of the Holy Father; Father Schneider's German edition of "Maurel on Indulgences," which has received the special approbation of the same Congregation; and a good article on the subject in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* for May, 1883.

the Sacred Congregation was consulted as to whether it was lawful to make Scapulars of an oval, round, or polygonal form, the response was, that no innovation should be made; in other words, that the form heretofore in use should be retained as the only proper one. (Decree Aug. 18, 1868. Schneider, p. 686, No. 9.)

As regards the material of which it is lawful to make Scapulars, it must be woolen cloth; cotton, or silk, or other material, is strictly forbidden; and it must be further remembered that by the word *cloth* is strictly meant *woven* cloth, so that if threads of wool were knit or worked with the needle into the form of a Scapular it would not do. (Same Decree.) In color the Scapular must be brown or black. The habit of the Carmelites, of which it is a symbol, is brown, and hence that has always been regarded as the proper color for the Scapular; but it was maintained by some that the wool of a black sheep, inasmuch as it was the natural color of the wool, and not dyed, would also do. When the question was brought before the Sacred Congregation, it replied that the members of the Confraternity gained the indulgences although the color of the Scapular was not precisely brown, provided the color substituted for brown was something similar to it, or black. (Decree Feb. 12, 1840. Schneider, p. 686, No. 8.) It is permitted, although it is not necessary, to ornament Scapulars with needle-work, even though the ornamentation be of a different color from that of the Scapular; nor need such ornament be worked with woolen thread; silk, or cotton, or thread of any other kind may be used. But it is essential that the necessary color of the Scapular should predominate. It is not necessary to work any image or picture on the Scapular; it may, however, be done if the color of the Scapular is left to predominate. (Decree Aug. 18, 1868. Schneider, p. 686, No. 12.)

Who may be invested with the Scapular? The Church not only permits, but wishes that all the faithful should enroll themselves among the devout servants of the Mother of Christ, as she wishes them to make use of all the other means of grace

which in her liberality she places within their reach; hence all Catholics may be lawfully and validly invested with the Scapular, there being nothing in the Bulls or Briefs of the Sovereign Pontiffs to forbid it. Even infants who have not yet come to the use of reason may be invested; and when they reach the years of discretion it is not necessary for them to be again invested, or to do anything more than simply comply with the necessary conditions for gaining the indulgences, and immediately they will begin to reap these spiritual advantages. (Decree Aug. 29, 1864. Schneider, p. 685, No. 1.)

By whom can a person be invested? By a priest of the Carmelite Order, or by any other priest having the requisite faculties or powers. In this country it is customary for Bishops to give all their priests, among other faculties, that of investing with the Scapular. A priest who has power to invest others may also invest himself. (Decree March 7, 1840.) It is not absolutely necessary that a priest, invested with the Scapular, should use the formula found in the Ritual of the Carmelites; he may use any other, provided it is substantially the same. (Decree Aug. 24, 1844.) But one priest cannot bless the Scapular and another invest a person with it; the blessing and investing must both be done by the same person. (Decree June 16, 1872.) The practice which prevailed in some places, of giving blessed Scapulars to pious laymen for distribution among the faithful is also forbidden under penalty of forfeiting all the graces and indulgences attached to the Scapular. The Scapular must be received from the hands of a priest duly authorized to invest with it the faithful under his charge. (Decree Sept. 18, 1862.) If the first enrolment was invalid for any reason whatever, such as the Scapular not being of the requisite material, or form, or both parts being at one end of the strings, it is not sufficient for the person so invalidly enrolled to get a Scapular and have it blessed: he must be again invested as if he had never before gone through the ceremony at all, as the same Decree declares.

As to the place and manner of being invested, a person may receive the Scapular in any becoming place; and the sick may

receive it in their beds. It is not necessary for the person being invested to hold the Scapular in his hands: it suffices that it be placed near him; nor is a lighted candle or incense needed. But the priest who invests must himself, under penalty of nullity, place the Scapular on the neck of the person whom he invests; but when the first Scapular is worn out or lost, or got rid of in any other way, all that is necessary is for the person to get another Scapular properly made, and put it on without blessing or ceremony. When a number of persons are invested at the same time, all the Scapulars may be blessed at once; but the form of investment must be repeated as each Scapular is placed on the neck of the person who is to wear it. (Schneider, pp. 686-688.) In case a number of persons are to be invested at the same time, and there are not enough Scapulars for all, the same one may be successively placed on several persons one after another; they can then procure Scapulars each for himself as soon as convenient; but the first Scapular each wears must be duly blessed. (Decree Aug. 18, 1868.) It was formerly necessary that persons receiving the Scapular should have their names enrolled with the Carmelites at Rome; but Pope Gregory XVI dispensed with this obligation April 30, 1838, which dispensation was confirmed by a Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Sept. 17, 1845. If a person puts off his Scapular for a longer or shorter time, either through carelessness or out of contempt, and afterwards resolves to commence wearing it, it is not necessary for him to be newly invested: it is sufficient to put on the Scapular again and wear it, trusting in the mercy of God that he will again be made partaker of the graces attached to the Confraternity. (Schneider, p. 688, Nos. 22, 23.)

What are the spiritual advantages of wearing the Scapular? First, let us understand what precisely is meant by *wearing* it; for on this depends the participation in these spiritual favors. By wearing the Scapular, then, is meant that it be so adjusted that one part hangs on the breast and the other on the back, one of the strings passing over each shoulder. If both parts be carried on the breast, or both on the back, it is not wearing

it at all, in the sense of the Church, and the person so doing will not be entitled to any of the graces or indulgences. Much less would a person be entitled to them who carried the Scapular in his pocket. To keep the Scapular about him at all might indeed be a sign of devotion to Mary, and of confidence in her protection, and as such would receive a fitting reward; but it is not in any sense to be regarded as *wearing* the Scapular. It is not necessary, however, that the Scapular should be worn next the person; it may be worn over or under any part of the clothing. Indeed, the religious who wear the large Scapular are accustomed, as we know, to have it outside their habit. (Schneider, p. 686, No. 11.)

The spiritual advantages of wearing the Scapular are fivefold: those which are received during life; those received at the approach of death; those after death; the Sabbatine Indulgence or privilege, and the other indulgences granted to those who wear the Scapular. Much of what I shall say on these points, it is but just to state, is taken almost *verbatim* from the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* (1883, pp. 326-333). As regards the advantages that may be received during life, it is to be remarked that the members of any Confraternity of the Scapular are associated with the religious order represented by that particular Scapular; which means that they participate in the fruit of all the good works of the religious belonging to such order; that is, in the fruit of their prayers, meditations, Masses, fasting, penances, alms, and all else that goes to form the spiritual treasures of the order. Now, the Brown Scapular represents the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. But the devout wearers of this Scapular enjoy favors not granted to those who wear the other Scapulars; for Popes Clement VII. and Clement X. declared that the associates participate in a special manner in the fruit not only of the spiritual works of the Carmelites, to whom they are united as a confraternity, but also in all the good done throughout the whole Catholic Church. The associates of this Scapular have received, as we have seen, the promise of the Blessed Virgin, according to the revelation made to St. Simon Stock, to be adopted as her favorite and priv-

ileged children, and to enjoy during life her special protection both for soul and body.

The favors granted at the approach of death to those who devoutly wear the Scapular are that there is for them, like for those who wear the other Scapulars, a formula for a general absolution at the moment of death, independent of the "Last Blessing," which all the faithful are privileged to receive in their departing hour. Persons wearing the Scapular are also encouraged to hope for the special assistance of the Mother of God at the point of death, as she promised St. Simon Stock: "He who dies clothed with this Scapular shall not suffer eternal fire." This is what is called the "privilege of preservation." It means that the Blessed Virgin, by her powerful intercession, will draw from the divine treasury in favor of the associates special graces to help the good to persevere to the end, and to move sinners to avail themselves of favorable opportunities of conversion before death seizes on them. This privilege may also mean that sometimes, owing to the influence of the Blessed Virgin, the hour of death is postponed, to give an associate who is in sin a further opportunity of conversion; and writers add that this privilege may be sometimes exemplified in the case of obstinate and obdurate sinners, when God permits death to come upon them when they are not wearing the Scapular, either as the result of forethought, or from indifference or neglect."

As regards the graces after death, "the deceased members of the Brown Scapular have a special share in the fruit of the daily prayers of the Order of the Carmelites, and of the Holy Sacrifice which they offer once a week, and occasionally at other times during the year, for the deceased Carmelites and associates of the Carmelite Confraternity."

The meaning of the Sabbatine Indulgence is this: "The associates of the Scapular of Carmel enjoy, on certain conditions, however, which we will mention later on, the remarkable privilege known as the 'privilege of deliverance,' or the 'Sabbatine Indulgence.' This privilege refers to, and is grounded on, the promise of the Blessed Virgin, made to Pope John XXII., to withdraw promptly from purgatory, and especially on the first

Saturday after death, associates of the Scapular of Carmel. The account of this revelation Pope John XXII. embodied in his famous Bull *Sacratissimo uti culmine,* more commonly called the Sabbatine Bull, on account of the promise of deliverance on the first Saturday after death. The genuineness of this Bull has been questioned on the ground of internal tokens of the absence of authenticity, and also because it is not found in the Roman Bullarium. It is, however, printed in the Bullarium of the Carmelites and in many other works." It may further be said that Pope Benedict XIV. admits its authenticity. "Leaving the discussion of the authenticity of this Bull to others whom it concerns more directly, it is enough for us to know that the privilege of deliverance has been explained and sanctioned by succeeding Popes. Paul V., when giving permission to the Carmelite Fathers to preach this indulgence to the faithful, explains the nature of it in this way: 'The Carmelite Fathers,' he says, 'are allowed to preach that the people can believe that the Blessed Virgin will help, by her continual assistance, her merits, and her special protection after death, and particularly on Saturdays,—the day consecrated by the Church to the Blessed Virgin,—the souls of members of the Confraternity of Mount Carmel who have died in the grace of God, and who have in life worn her habit, observed chastity according to their state, and recited the Office of the Blessed Virgin, or, if they are not able to recite the Office, who have observed the fasts of the Church, and abstained from meat on Wednesdays and Saturdays, except when Christmas falls on either of these days.' The Second Nocturn of the Office of the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, given in the Roman Breviary, speaks of this privilege in much the same language. We read in this Office: 'It is piously believed since her power and mercy have everywhere great efficacy, that the Most Blessed Virgin consoles with special maternal affection the associates of this Scapular, when detained in the fire of purgatory, who have practised certain light abstinence, repeated certain prescribed prayers, and observed chastity according to their state in life; and that she will endeavor

to bring them to heaven sooner than would otherwise happen.'"

To recapitulate. The conditions requisite for gaining these spiritual advantages are the following: To observe exactly what has been prescribed regarding the material, color, and form of the Scapular; to receive it from a priest duly authorized to give it; and to wear it constantly in the manner prescribed. The conditions just mentioned are the only ones prescribed for membership of this Scapular confraternity or association. *No prayers are necessary, no special good works;* in a word, *no other condition.* I must, however, except the special advantage of the "privilege of deliverance," or "Sabbatine Indulgence," for which the following conditions, in addition to those necessary for membership of the Confraternity, are required: 1. Chastity according to one's state. 2. The daily recitation of the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, as given in the Roman Breviary. Those who say the Canonical Office (the Office said by all priests) comply by means of it with this condition, even though the Office is already, as in the case of priests, a matter of obligation. For those who cannot read, this condition has been changed into abstinence from meat on Wednesdays and Saturdays. (Decree Feb. 12, 1840. Schneider, p. 689, No. 27.)

Although the wearing of the Scapular, and the conditions prescribed for gaining the indulgences and other spiritual favors, do not, absolutely speaking, induce any new obligation binding upon conscience, yet the person invested with the Scapular who through his own indifference or neglect should fail to fulfil the obligations of the Confraternity could not be regarded as free from at least some venial fault before God. (Schneider, p. 689, No. 26.) To gain the plenary and partial indulgences that are granted in addition to the favors and graces already enumerated, it is necessary to fulfil the other conditions prescribed for each of these particular indulgences.

When the Superior-General of the Carmelites was asked whether the laying aside of the Scapular for a day would forfeit the indulgences and other favors or not, he replied that, as one

day was but a small part of the year, there was no reason why we should conclude that the indulgences would be forfeited. (Schneider, p. 688, No. 20.)

I shall not give all the indulgences that are granted to those who devoutly wear the Scapular and comply with the special conditions upon which each is granted; but shall quote the words of the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record:* "It is no small advantage to have numerous indulgences specially granted on easy conditions in favor of those who wear the Scapular. These conditions vary a good deal, and to know exactly what are the conditions required for a particular indulgence, we must examine the terms of the grant, or consult some approved book on indulgences that treats of it. To illustrate what we say we will mention a few of the indulgences granted in favor of those who wear the Brown Scapular, with the conditions attached: (1.) A plenary indulgence on the day of receiving the Scapular. Conditions: Confession and Communion. (2.) Plenary indulgence at the moment of death. Conditions: Confession, Communion, and the devout invocation with the lips, or at least with the heart, of the Holy Name of Jesus. (3.) 100 days' indulgence. Conditions: Devout recital of the Office of the Blessed Virgin. Thus each indulgence is granted on certain conditions, which can be known with accuracy only by investigating the particular case." Schneider (p. 380) further states that, by a Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences, June 22, 1865, all Masses said for the repose of the souls of deceased members enjoy the advantage of a privileged altar; that is, a plenary indulgence is gained for the souls for whose repose the Holy Sacrifice is celebrated. The same author gives all the other indulgences granted to the Scapular, and the conditions upon which they may be gained.

The indulgences and other spiritual advantages granted to those who devoutly wear this livery of Mary, which have been placed before the reader in this article, are a sufficient exhortation and inducement to all to clothe themselves with it, and hence I shall not pause to make any other.

THE BROWN SCAPULAR

Blessed badge of service sweet!
  Livery of a Sov'reign fair!
Sign of fealty complete!
  Pledge of fond maternal care!

Dear to me thy fabric coarse,
  Fairer far thy hue of brown
Than the rays of rainbow source
  Poisoned in a jewelled crown.

With the sacred scenes of yore,
  Thou dost gift my spirit's view
Dreams of royal robes that bore
  E'en thy texture and thy hue;

Dreams of Nazareth—Eden fair—
  Home wherein the holy Three
Dwelt afar from worldly care,
  In a sweet obscurity,—

There, beside the cottage door,
  Clad in woolen raiment dun,
Mary, spinning, ponders o'er
  Sayings of her Blessed Son.

Scapular of Carmel blest!
  Wakened by the mystic name,
Visions rise of verdant crest,
  Crowned with ring of holy flame—

Carmel's Mount! whereon abode
  One whose pure, prophetic gaze
Saw, at midnght, skies that glowed
  With the wondrous morning blaze.

Now to Faith's illumined age,
  Floats my soul in dreams adown,
And I see a saintly sage,
  Clad in coarsest robe of brown—

Holy Simon! 'Mid his prayer,
  Shines a sweet ecstatic scene—
Lo! the Mother-Maiden fair!
  Lo! the bright, celestial Queen!

See! within her shining hand,
Carmel's Scapular of brown!
Hark! she decks her sweet command
With a blessed promise-crown:

"Give this pledge of peace divine
To my subjects fond and true,
Bid them wear my service-sign,
Coarse of texture, brown of hue,

"For a matchless boon it bears—
'Tis my promise made to thee—
Who this badge devoutly wears
With the blest his lot shall be."

Blessed promise! peerless boon!
Let me read its meaning right,
Let me ne'er its truth impugn,
Let me ne'er its treasure slight;

Of the badge of service blest,
Faithful bearer must I be—
On an ever loyal breast
Wearing that sweet livery;

Thus the promise shall not fail—
Thus the treasures shall be mine
Crown of light that cannot pale,
Royal robe of peace divine.

Ave Maria.

APPARITION TO
ST. CLARE V. [F. POOR CLARES]
ASSISI, ITALY

APPARITION

TO

ST. CLARE V. [F. POOR CLARES] ASSISI, ITALY

1253

Fair Queen of Virgins: thy pure band,
The lilies round thy throne,
Love the dear title which they bear
Most that it is thine own.

Adelaide A. Procter.

ST. CLARE was born at Assisi (a city in Italy), on the 14th of February, 1193. Her father was called Favorino Sciffo, and her mother Hortulana. They were distinguished for their high lineage, great fortune, and above all, for their Christian virtues. She manifested, from her earliest years, exceeding great piety and charity for the poor. From the tenderest age she was accustomed to repeat frequently in the day the Angelical Salutation, and she counted her prayers on little stones, that she carried about her, in imitation of the anchorets in the East.

At that time there appeared in the world, a man chosen by God to do wonderful works. The reputation which this man had acquired by his virtues already rendered him celebrated throughout Italy. He came to Assisi, where he continued to perform the same prodigies for which he had been distinguished elsewhere. An exterior remarkable for austerity, and yet modest and simple—a sweet-toned, modulated voice, affectionate and conciliating manners, sustained occasionally by a rapid and bold eloquence, were the chiefest characteristics of this new missionary of truth. He was everywhere known by the name of Francis of Assisi.

Clare, like everyone else, hastened to hear this wonderful man, who possessed such singular power over human heart.

She saw him and heard him with that emotion which the novelty of the spectacle was calculated to awaken. "Ah! what a courageous man!" she exclaimed, in the first impulse of her surprise; "he preaches boldly, and openly practiseth, what I have been merely meditating. This, doubtless, is the man chosen by Providence to calm the agitations of my heart, and to mark out the way which I ought to follow. Aid me, O God!" she cried, "and do not abandon me to the bewilderment of my thoughts." Subsequently, she had reason to know that her presentiments of the influence that Francis was destined to exercise over her were not vain conjectures.

It is quite true that all Francis' sermons harmonized admirably with Clare's thoughts, and they were, therefore, calculated to make the liveliest impression on her heart. Nevertheless, she distrusted herself ever since the first moment that she heard the man of God, and she likewise distrusted the first impulse which his preaching communicated. Everything urged her to follow the rigid rule of penance and self-renunciation that he inculcated, but she would not act precipitately in an undertaking which, according to her own foresight, was destined to produce such great results on the whole tenor of her life. Knowing the merits and great piety of Bona Guelfucci, the most intimate of her earliest friends, and her kinswoman, she candidly revealed to her all the workings of her heart:—"Oh!" she said to her in conversation, "how weak are we, compared to that man, whose heroism we have been admiring! See how he tramples prejudices, see how he triumphs over human passions. But has this extraordinary man known the world in his youth? Is it since his infancy that he has allied himself to supernal wisdom? His humility, mortifications, his entire renouncement of all that constitutes the charms of life—is all this the result of education or of temperament? His mode of life astounds me; everything in his conduct edifies me; but I would wish to know his beginnings, that I might be able to decide the amount of confidence I ought to give him, and thus discover what I myself may come to be in the course of time."

No one was better fitted to enlighten Clare on these points than Bona Guelfucci. She had the good fortune to find in this kinswoman a person of profound judgment, who reported to her all that was then currently told of Francis, in fact, all that was said of him, day after day.

"His father," quoth she, "was a wealthy man; being a merchant, he thought of nothing but amassing money. He gave his son a most excellent education; and Francis soon manifested considerable passion for the vain amusements of the world, and worldly possession. It is true, that he was very solicitous about the distressed, and that he looked on money as a means of satisfying the disposition that was congenial to him. It is also true, that he loathed the gross passions which tyrannize over the soul, and plunge it in shame and remorse. Nevertheless, like most of the young people who are captivated by illusions, he adopted the profession of arms; but he soon discovered that of all pursuits this was the one least suited to his requirements. He experienced troubles and reverses; he was made prisoner; he fell sick; he had time to meditate; and the first consequence of his reflections was, a clear perception of the instability and nothingness of all things earthly and, furthermore, a conviction that an entire change of life was necessary."

"But how," asked Clare, "has it happened that Francis could so suddenly abandon the world, and embrace a life so unlike that which he was wont to lead?"

"A soul touched by God," replied Bona Guelfucci, "soon surmounts all difficulties. From the moment that Francis had begun to taste the heavenly gift, he detached himself insensibly from all that agreeable society which has no other object in view save amusements. He then applied himself to trample on pride and its suggestions, abandoning himself publicly to the most humiliating practices. Nay, he triumphed over a squeamishness, which revolted him, whilst approaching a mendicant wretchedly clothed, and covered with sores. He did himself violence, that he might be able to familiarize himself with them, and embrace them. Nay, he dressed them with his own cloth-

ing, and put on theirs. Once triumphant over these repugnances, Francis recognized all mankind as an assemblage of weak, wretched creatures, whom he should instruct and console. He repeated incessantly, that they were his brethren; that they had but one common Father, who was in heaven; and that all their energies should be employed to serve Him, and love one another. Such is an epitome of the man whom you desire to know; the man who speaks to us with such powers, unction, and charity."

Clare's interview with her kinswoman removed all her waverings. Some youthful aberrations of Francis's life made him appear to her to be still more deserving of esteem. St. Clare had never exposed her irreproachable youth to the eyes of men, or to the illusions which dazzled Francis for the moment; and and she concluded, that a man of his character, who did not renounce the world till he had tested it, was eminently qualified to guide and sustain a soul that was still weak. She then attended more diligently and assiduously the instructions that the man of God ordinarily pronounced in the Church of St. George, at Assisi, and each time she heard him she reproached herself with being so weak, and so attached to a world where we have no lengthened tenure, and where we must encounter so much misery and affliction. She could not imagine anything more just or noble for a thoughtful soul, than to consecrate itself entirely to the service of the great and everlasting God. During these moments, recollection and silence inflamed her desires; from the depths of her heart she cried to Francis for succor. She yearned for him to hear her, and to be near her, that she might pour out her whole soul to him. As yet she had never had any particular conversation with him, although she was well aware of the advantages that must result from an interview, but she hoped to find the favorable opportunity in good time.

This opportunity at length presented itself, and Clare had some interviews with the man of God. One day, when in company with her faithful companion, Bona Guelfucci, Francis spoke to them with such power, of the vanity of the world, of

the shortness of life, and of the necessity of attaching one's self to the acquirement of heavenly goods, that Clare resolved to put an end to all incertitudes and to renounce the world. She arranged with Francis as to the day on which she would put on the penitential habit. The ceremony was appointed for the 19th of March, the day after Palm Sunday. Clare resolved to assist at the distribution of the palms, to receive hers from the hands of the Bishop, and next day retire to the convent of Portiuncula.

On Sunday Clare arrayed herself in her richest robes and, accompanied by her mother and sisters, presented herself in the principal church of Assisi, where she devoutly assisted at the solemnity. Wholly absorbed in meditating the grand mysteries of the Church, and pondering deeply on the important step she was about to take on the next day, she forgot to go along with the crowd to receive her palm from the celebrant. The Bishop, perceiving this, went himself to present the palm to the young maiden. She received this mark of respect with mingled joy and surprise. Penetrated with the most lively gratitude, she remembered what Francis had said to her a few days before, and she looked on the palm, given her by the Bishop, as a sure pledge of the victory that she was about to obtain over the world: and she soon had need of all her courage and strength.

Although Clare's parents lived in the fear of God, they were far from wishing that their daughter should abandon them forever, to go and bury herself in a cloister. Clare, to her high lineage, added the attractions of wealth and rare beauty. The most distinguished men in the province knew that, in aspiring to Clare's hand, they were sure of finding the most eligible advantages; and her father and mother seemed disposed to make their choice. They observed that for some time back their daughter had become more serious, and that she went often to Portiuncula to consult Francis. Little did they dream that she was about to be his proselyte. Far otherwise; they believed that none but privileged souls could walk in the footsteps of the Saint; and their human affection for their child led them

to conjecture that God did not call her to such an extraordinary life, which must separate them forever. Clare, on her part, had long sought to prepare them for this separation. From time to time she spoke to them of the advantage of solitary life, of the happiness of a soul that spurns all earth's pleasures, in order to serve God; and as often did she convince them that there is no real happiness for a Christian who knows his religion, save in the performance of its duties. But these ingenious conversations did not fully reveal her secret. Perhaps she dreaded to be more explicit, lest they would render her unable to carry out her design. She knew the hot temper of her father, who, albeit a religious man, was nevertheless one of those who shrink from going too close to perfection: but whilst indulging the fastidiousness of her parents, she was not the less determined on making the sacrifice promptly, and she was now on the eve of consummating it.

In compliance, therefore, with the arrangement made with St. Francis, she left her home on the Monday after Palm Sunday, which was the 18th of March, 1212. In the morning-time she quitted the paternal roof. That day was the happiest of her life, for it beheld her entering the monastery of Portiuncula, where Francis and his religious awaited her. They all came to the gate to meet her, singing the hymn, "Veni, Sancte Spiritus." Clare advanced with a firm step to the altar of the Blessed Virgin; and there prostrate, and with head bent to the floor, she begged humbly all those external signs that were to distinguish a penitent who had vowed to spend all her days in the shadow of the sanctuary and in evangelical mortifications.

Francis remained silent for a few moments, and than turning to the young maiden, explained to her the advantages and obligations of the new state which she had chosen to embrace. In a few words he told her that she had voluntarily resigned the wealth and comforts which the people of the world must resign in spite of themselves; that the peace of the soul, which she was about to gain by her sacrifice, was far more desirable than the tumultuous pleasures which the world provides, which fleet away rapidly, and which always leave behind them in the

heart's depths bitterness and sorrow. He gave her to understand that the God to whom she consecrated herself was faithful to his promises, magnificent in his rewards, and that he often gave back, even in this world, more than he had received —thus, as it were, anticipating that ineffable crown of glory which he bestows in heaven on those whose energies were devoted to him whilst here below.

Clare knew the truth of these words, and she had already begun to taste the interior sweetness which follows such a sacrifice as hers. The young maiden then cast away from her, with her own hand, the vain ornaments that covered her head. Then St. Francis cut off her hair, and gave her the penitential robe, which was nothing else than a sort of sack, which she fastened to her body with a cord. She was at this period nineteen years of age. As St. Francis had not as yet any nuns of his Order he sent her to the Benedictine monastery of St. Paul, where she was received with great marks of affection. The Poor Clares date from this epoch the foundation of their Order.

Clare's retirement, and all the circumstances that accompanied it—extraordinary as the whole proceeding was—could not but make a great impression in Assisi. The world—the would-be wise of the period, who judge events only according to their prejudices—regarded the act of this young maiden as an inexcusable imprudence; and they characterized it further as the result of a weak mind, which had suffered itself to be overborne by the vehement harangues of an enthusiast. Her parents knew not what to think. They determined, however, at all risk, to tear her from the monastery where she had been located. They flattered themselves that threats and promises would shake the resolution of the young proselyte, who as yet had not had time to confirm herself in her state, and that by such means they would once more see her under the ancestral roof.

They proceeded, therefore, to the monastery; they demanded to see and speak to the young religious, who did not doubt that every species of attempt would be made to remove her. She was not disconcerted. She appeared before her parents with

an expression so satisfied and so decided, that they were astounded.

Hortulana, her mother, was the first to arrive. Her address to her child was friendly and pathetic, the only style of address that was likely to affect her. "You leave us, my child," she commenced, "precisely at the moment when you could requite us for all the cares we have bestowed on your infancy, and console the infirmities and reverses which time and events always bring on declining years. Have I been a cruel mother to thee? Daughter, you know how I loved thee! Thou wert my consolation and joy. In thee I centered all my most treasured hopes, and now you abandon me without warning. In the night time, I may say, thou didst fly from me. Thou hast quitted the tenderest of mothers to bury thyself in dark seclusion; to dwell amongst persons of all ages, of all characters; and, above all, amongst those whom thou knowest not. Daughter, if a mother's voice can yet persuade thee, surely thou wilt return with me, instead of precipitating, by obstinate perseverance, the death of her who gave thee life."

Clare was too sensitive not to be affected by her mother's appeal. Tears flowed down her cheeks, and they were her only answer. Resuming the serenity of her character, she revealed her feelings, and gave her mother to understand the motives which had determined her. "'Tis true," said she, "that I have left you; but I have left you for the King of kings; the best of fathers; for the God who died for me. This God, ah! so little known in this age, is worthy of my services. He has deigned to speak to my heart; he has supported my weakness. I am astonished myself at the courage he imparted to me to shatter all the ties that bound me to you; but these ties are not entirely broken; religion does not destroy our natural feelings, it only perfects and sanctifies them. I will always love you as I ought. The ardour and sincerity of my prayer seem to promise that I may yet be useful to you; that we shall not be separated for ever; and that, perhaps, the moment for our re-union is not so far off as you might be led to imagine."

This language of moderation and gentleness somewhat

calmed Hortulana's chagrin, whilst it only intensified that of Favorino. He told his daughter that her mystic language pleased him not; that he did not comprehend it; that her conduct dishonored her family, and that he would never consent to her burying herself in a cloister; that if the indulgent and confiding conduct of her mother had favored her absconding, he knew how to take means to compel her to return. At this moment he grew excited; rushed at her; and was about to tear her from the midst of the religious who surrounded her, when she appealed to him thus: "What wouldst thou, my father? Profane not, I conjure thee, this asylum of peace, by menaces or violence. This is the home to which God has called me, and I have already broken all the ties that bound me to the world." She then showed him her shorn head, which was the first sign of her self-dedication to religion; then, casting herself at his knees, and holding by the corner of the altar, she exclaimed, "No, Lord, I will never abandon Thee; the efforts of the world and hell shall be unavailing. I wish not to live, save for Thee alone." Clare's generous resistance disconcerted her parents and, downcast by the failure of their attempts, they retired to plan some new scheme for the attainment of their object. They soon had recourse to other devices. They employed their relatives, and other persons remarkable for their position and virtues, but all was useless, and the young religious continued unshaken. Calmly and contentedly she pursued the course which she so courageously opened to herself.

After this, St. Francis removed her to the monastery of St. Angelo de Panso, situated in the vicinity of Assisi; and this monastery belonged to the Order of St. Benedict. Her sister Agnes came to join her here, and subjected herself to the same discipline. The parents' persecutions were now renewed against the two sisters, but their constancy triumphed, and Francis gave the habit to Agnes, who was now only fourteen years of age. He placed the two sisters in a small house contiguous to the Church of St. Damian; and he appointed Clare superioress of the young monastery.

Doubtless, it was owing to the prayers of the Saint that

Hortulana, her mother, and many other female members of her family, subsequently embraced, along with the two sisters, all their penitential austerities.

The community soon reckoned sixteen members, three of whom belonged to the illustrious house of the Ubaldini of Florence. Even princesses found more happiness in the poverty of Clare than they had ever known in their grand possessions, pleasures and mundane honors. In a few years the new Order made rapid increases. It had monasteries at Perugia, Arezzo, Padua, Rome, Venice, Mantua, Bologna, Spoleto, Milan, Siena, Pisa, and in all the principal cities of Germany. Agnes, daughter of the King of Bohemia, founded one in Prague, and there she became a religious.

St. Clare and her community practised austerities which hitherto had been unknown to their sex. They went barefoot, kept perpetual abstinence, and never spoke, except when necessity or charity obliged them. Not content with practising general mortifications, Clare wore sackcloth, and fasted almost throughout the whole year. She passed part of the night in prayer; and often would this tenderly-reared lady, who had slept on a rich couch beneath the paternal roof, use no other bed than a few branches scattered on the floor, and the trunk of a tree for a pillow.

Such austerities so weakened her health, that St. Francis, and the Bishop of Assisi, compelled her to lie down on a wretched bed, and never to allow a day to pass without taking some refreshment. Notwithstanding this extraordinary love of penance, none ever saw anything like gloom or sadness about her; on the contrary, her features were cheerful and serene, and this proved what happiness she derived from her mortifications.

St. Francis desired that her Order should be principally based on poverty; he therefore determined that the community should subsist on whatsoever the charity of the faithful gave them. He ruled, moreover, that they should have no fixed income. St. Clare was always animated by the same spirit, and her love of poverty was most admirable. A very great property having

lapsed to her at her father's decease, she distributed all to the poor, and retained nothing for her monastery. When Pope Gregory IX. was about to introduce some modification into the rule regarding poverty, and when he was about to endow the monastery of St. Damian, she conjured him, in the most effective manner, to make no change whatsoever in their obligation, and the Pope acquiesced in her desire. The other religious bodies memorialled Innocent IV. to allow them to possess some property, and at the same period Clare implored this Pontiff to sanction the evangelical poverty observed in her Order. This prayer was granted in 1251. Innocent IV. wrote the Bull with his own hand, and moistened it with his tears. Clare's humility kept pace wth her love of poverty; although superioress, she claimed no exemption; all her ambition was to be the servant of the servants of God; she washed the feet of the lay sisters when they returned from questing; she served at table and attended to the sick, even when afflicted by the most nauseating maladies. Always first to rise in the morning, she immediately repaired to the choir to prepare everything for the divine office. Always rapt in prayer, she arose from her knees with features glowing with the heavenly fires that consumed her soul; and then her language possessed an unction and energy that kindled a heavenly warmth in the hearts of all those to whom she spoke.

The peace and tranquillity enjoyed by the religious in the Convent of St. Damian, under the government of their superioress, caused them to be respected and cherished more and more; but God was pleased, at this moment, to permit one of those extraordinary events, which augmented the veneration in which our Saint was held, and which rendered her so celebrated as to become a pillar of strength, not only for her community, but furthermore, for her country, and for all Italy.

The Emperor Frederic II. had been ravaging the valley of Spoleto, which belonged to the Holy See. His army was chiefly composed of Saracens and other infidels. He flung into this part of Italy twenty thousand enemies of the Church. These barbarians, thirsting for pillage and carnage, laid siege to

Assisi; they attacked the Convent of St. Damian, which was outside the walls; and a soldier was in the act of scaling the walls of the convent, when the companions of Clare, alarmed by the danger that menaced them, began to invoke Heaven, and ran to the arms of their mother, there to find protection against the fury of their assailants. Clare, confiding in the mercies of Heaven, calmed the fears of her trembling community, and then addressed her God in the following prayer: "Surely, Lord, thou hast not brought together so many innocent victims into thy sanctuary in order that they might become the spoil of the impious? Thou wouldst not have supported us to this day; thou wouldst not have heaped so many blessings on us, that we might be trodden under foot, or that we might perish in the most frightful manner—in a manner so incompatible with the condition of virgins consecrated to thy service? . . . No, Lord, I hope in thee, thou wilt not permit that our souls, which live for thee, should perish under the swords of those who blaspheme thy holy name." Her prayer ended, a gentle voice seemed to say to her: "Thou shalt always be under my protection." Sick as she was, she then proceeded to the gate of the monastery, and caused the ciborium, containing the Holy Sacrament, to be carried before her; calmly and recollectedly she braved the fury of the enemy, whilst she displayed before the infidel's eyes Him in whom she had placed her hope and salvation. Thus did the Lord prove to her that it costs Him no trouble to operate miracles in favor of those who place their confidence in Him. No sooner had those ferocious men beheld Clare, surrounded by all these august circumstances, than they were seized with a sudden terror; an invisible power agitated and confounded them; they abandoned the monastery and town, and dispersed and fled in such hot haste, that many of them were dangerously wounded.

The storm was dissipated for the while, but not for any lengthened period. Some years afterwards Frederic commenced his spoliations in the Duchy of Spoleto. Assisi was besieged again. Clare then assembled her religious, and told them that as they depended on the town for their sustenance

they should assist it by all means in their power, now that it was in a direful extremity. She told them to humble themselves before our Lord, and to pray him to rescue their fellow-citizens. For an entire day and night they wept and prayed, and, at last, obtained their request. The enemy suddenly altered his plans, raised the siege, and returned without doing any mischief. Soon afterwards their general, who was a cruel and proud man, lost his life.

Like St. Francis, Clare had a tender devotion for the mysteries of the birth and passion of our Lord. She never meditated the sufferings of the Son of God without shedding tears, and experiencing the liveliest emotions of the divine love. Sometimes, when surrounded by the sisterhood, she would take up the crucifix and discourse to them on all the advantages they could derive from deep recollectedness in presence of that holy object. "Sisters," she would say to them, "behold the superabundant treasure out of which I take all that I require. If I be downcast or feeble, the cross strengthens and supports me; if I am perplexed, it clears up my doubtings; if I suffer, it reanimates and encourages me; if I am afflicted, if I weep, it is the Cross that dries my tears, and consoles me. In darkness it is my light; in despair and terror it is my hope and my support; in sickness and sorrow it sweetens my tribulations and shortens my sufferings. Oh! how I hope when on my death bed that this holy sign will defend me against my invisible enemies; and that when I stand before my Judge, it may be my consolation and my joy."

Behold what happened a few days before her death. The Merciful Mother, accompanied by a multitude of virgins in snow-white dresses and wearing splendid crowns of gold on their heads, came to visit her. The glorious Virgin herself was among them as an empress, with an imperial diadem resplendent with precious stones. From her countenance issued such splendor that it outshone the sun's. Thus clothed in glory she approached the humble servant of God, folded her in her arms, and most lovingly pressed her to her bosom and, giving her the holy kiss of peace, she filled her heart with a strength and

a consolation wholly celestial. All the virgins who accompanied her surrounded the bed of the dying Saint, and spread on it a golden cover, as being the couch of the Spouse who was soon to come and visit His beloved to lead her to heaven.

At length, Clare's illness seized her, and when her community exhorted her to bear her sufferings resignedly, she answered: "I have never tasted the bitterness of the Lord's chalice. In all my life I have never found anything to afflict me. Whosoever loveth God can turn pain into sweetest pleasure." The Sovereign Pontiff, learning that she was approaching her earthly term, made a journey from Perugia to Assisi, to see her. He conversed with her, and retired after deriving much benefit from this spiritual interview. After giving her the absolution of all her sins, he withdrew, saying: "A happy man were I if my soul were so pure in the eyes of God as that of this holy maiden. . . ."

Clare, encircled by her dear sisterhood, recommended them to love poverty, then blessed them in the name of God, and assured them that they should never be deserted by her.

After remaining, for some time, to all appearances dead, these last words were heard falling from her lips: "Fear not, my soul, He whom thou hast served accompanies thee. What dost thou await? He who created thee has had pity on thee. He has always loved thee with a love tenderer than that of a mother for her child. Blessed forever be thou, my God, who hast sustained me in all the circumstances of my life." She then grasped the crucifix, and pressing it to her lips, expired. Her death took place August 11th, A.D. 1253. She was in the sixtieth year of her age, and the forty-second of her religious profession.

Surrounded by thousands, she was buried on the day following. Myriads pressed to the body of her whom every one regarded as a Saint. Pope Innocent IV. assisted at her obsequies with many cardinals. Alexander IV. canonized her in 1255, *i.e.*, two years afterward.

Five years after her death her body was solemnly translated from the Church of St. Damian to the new monastery that has

been built within the walls of the city, by the Pope's command. The church that bears her name was erected in 1265. Pope Clement V. consecrated the grand altar, under the invocation of the Saint, and her relics are there even to this day.

The Order of St. Clare, which increased greatly during the life of the Saint, spread itself widely after her decease. A great number of convents of this Order exist in almost every part of the world.

PRAISE TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT*

Clear vault of heaven serenely blue,
How many stars come shining through
Thy azure depths?
Beyond all count are they,
Praised be the Blessed Sacrament,
As many times a day.

Fair world, the work of God's right hand,
How many are the grains of sand,
In all thy fame?
Beyond all count are they,
Praised be the Blessed Sacrament,
As many times a day.

Green meadows, wide as eye can see,
How many o'er thy sward may be,
The blades of grass?
Beyond all count are they,
Praised be the Blessed Sacrament,
As many times a day.

Ye groves and gardens, rich and fair,
What countless harvests do you bear;
Of fruit and flowers?
Beyond all count are they,
Praised be the Blessed Sacrament,
As many times a day.

*In the house of Madame Swetchine in the Rue St. Dominique, Paris, was a "beautiful private chapel, which was adorned with a multitude of precious stones from the Russian mines, gleaming around the ineffable presence of the Divinity. Mary, too, was there. On the base of her silver statue was her monogram in diamonds, which Madame Swetchine had worn as lady of honor to the Empress Mary of Russia."

Great ocean, boundless, uncontrolled,
How many do thy waters hold,
Of briny drops?
Beyond all count are they,
Praised be the Blessed Sacrament,
As many times a day.

High Sun, of all things centre bright,
How many are the rays of light,
That from thee dart?
Beyond all count are they,
Praised be the Blessed Sacrament,
As many times a day.

Eternity! oh! rest sublime,
How many moments of our time,
Are in thy length?
Beyond all count are they,
Praised be the Blessed Sacrament,
As many times a day.

Madame Swetchine.

PRAYER—"PIETATE TUA"

Loosen, O Lord, we pray Thee, in Thy pity, the bonds of our sins, and by the intercession of the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin Mother of God, the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, and all Saints, keep us, Thy servants, and our abodes in all holiness; cleanse us, our relations, kinsfolk, and acquaintances, from all vices; adorn us with all virtues; grant to us peace and health; repel our enemies visible and invisible; curb our carnal desires; grant us healthful seasons; bestow Thy charity upon our friends and our enemies; guard Thy holy city; preserve our Sovereign Pontiff Leo XIII., and defend all prelates, princes, and Christian people from all adversity. Let Thy blessing be ever upon us, and grant to all the faithful departed eternal rest. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

40 *days.* 100 *years and as many quarantines, if said every Saturday for a month.*

APPARITION
TO
ST. PETER CELESTINE
AQUILA, ITALY
1275

Oh, Maid divine! beholding in thy Son,
Life more divine, though first from thee begun;
Earth's loveliest art thou, wearing on thy brow
The thought of something lovelier still than thou.
Edward W. Mason.

AS a child, Peter had visions of Our Blessed Lady, and of the angels and Saints. They encouraged him in his prayers, and chided him when he fell into any fault. His mother, though only a poor widow, sent him to school, feeling sure that he would one day be a Saint. At the age of twenty, he left his home in Aquila to live in a mountain solitude. Here he spent three years assaulted by the evil spirits and beset with temptations of the flesh, but consoled by angels' visits. After this, his seclusion was invaded by disciples, who refused to be sent away; and the rule of life which he gave them formed the foundation of the Celestine Order. Angels assisted in the church which Peter built; unseen bells rang peals of surpassing sweetness, and heavenly music filled the sanctuary, when he offered the Holy Sacrifice. Suddenly he found himself torn from his loved solitude by his election to the Papal throne. Resistance was of no avail. He took the name of Celestine, to remind him of the heaven he was leaving and for which he sighed, and was consecrated at Aquila. After a reign of four months, Peter summoned the cardinals to his presence, and solemnly resigned his trust. St. Peter built himself a boarded cell in his palace, and there continued his hermit's life; and when, lest his simplicity might be taken advantage of to distract the peace of the

Church, he was put under guard, he said: "I desired nothing but a cell, and a cell they have given me." There he enjoyed his former loving intimacy with the Saints and angels, and sang the Divine praises almost continually. At length on Whit Sunday, he told his guards he should die within the week, and immediately fell ill. He received the last Sacraments; and the following Saturday, as he finished the concluding verse of Lauds, "Let every spirit bless the Lord!" he closed his eyes to this world and opened them to the vision of God, A.D. 1296.

MARY

Mary! a name too pure for mortal lips,
First borrowed from the songs of heaven
Or language of the Seraphim,
It stirs the soul, yet soothes our fears—
Oh, Mary! who, in joy or tears,
While onward o'er the surges driven,
Hath e'er unaided, called on thee,
Thou star of life's tempestuous sea!
Sweet name of power and Virgin love,
Fair as the spotless heavens above,
Bright as the wave beneath the Sun,
Pure as the cloudless diamond.

Rev. F. Geramb.—Trappist.

APPARITION

TO

ST. AGNES OF MONTE PULCIANO, V. O. S. D.

MONTE PULCIANO, ITALY

1277

Saint Agnes, bright gem in the grand Court of Heaven,
Whose jewelled gates glisten with jasper and gold;
What words to the children of earth have been given
To speak of thy worth, of thy glory untold?
What pearl could compare with thy pure soul so holy?
What ruby's rich depths with thy heart's fervent love?
What amethyst's glow with thy meek life so lowly?
What diamond with thy dazzling beauty above?

Eliza M. Bulger.

AINT AGNES was born of virtuous parents in the vicinity of Monte Pulciano, in Tuscany, in the year 1268. Extraordinary signs and a piety far beyond her years presaged what this child was one day to become. Whilst very young, she succeeded in extorting from her parents permission to enter an exceedingly austere convent. After a few years she was sent to assist in the foundation of another convent for the education of young girls at Porcena, of which she became Abbess, in virtue of a special dispensation from the Holy See, when only fifteen. She led a life of continual prayer and rigid penance; and God vouchsafed to show how pleasing she was in His sight by many signs and wonders. Flowers of exquisite fragrance and beauty would spring up on the spot where she had prayed; showers of manna, in the shape of little white crosses, would fall upon her in the presence of a crowd of witnesses; she was favored by frequent visions, and ten times received Holy Communion from an angel's hand. So great was the poverty of her convent that money and provisions often failed; in these circum-

stances the wants of the community were sometimes supplied by miracle.

After seventeen years spent at Porcena, the inhabitants of Monte Pulciano entreated Saint Agnes to found a convent within their walls. She had recourse to prayer in order to ascertain the will of God, and, as she prayed, a wonderful vision was granted her. She seemed to herself to be standing on the seashore, and three large and splendidly equipped boats floated on the waters before her. In one of these stood St. Augustine, St. Francis was in another, whilst on the prow of the third, she beheld St. Dominic. Each of the three Saints pressingly invited her to his boat, especially St. Francis, who alleged the resemblance of the habit she then wore with that of his daughters, the Poor Clares. After a long dispute, St. Dominic said to his two companions: "It will not be as you desire; the Lord has disposed that Agnes should embark on my boat." So saying, he drew her on board, and immediately a heavenly messenger stood beside the Saint and made known to her that she was to establish a community of virgins, as desired, at Monte Pulciano, on a hill which had hitherto been the resort of women of evil life, and that her daughters were to take the habit and follow the rule of St. Dominic.

This was accordingly done, and the Saint governed the new Community with the same wisdom and sweetness with which she had formerly ruled at Porcena, and was favored with the like demonstrations of God's watchful providence. Whilst at Porceno, Our Blessed Lady one day appeared to her and placed the Divine Infant in her arms. Before restoring Him to His Mother, the Saint had possessed herself of a little cross which was suspended from His neck by a slender thread. This treasure she had left behind her on going to Monte Pulciano, and she wrote to claim it. The Community at Porcena, who were in great grief at losing their holy Abbess, absolutely refused to give up the cross; whereupon the Saint betook herself to prayer, and it was immediately brought to her by an angel.

When the end of her earthly pilgrimage drew near, she was granted a Divine warning of the sufferings which awaited her

as a final purification before receiving her crown. One Sunday, at daybreak, as she was allowing herself a little rest after prayer, it seemed to her that an angel took her by the hand and, leading her under an olive-tree, as though to remind her of Our Lord's agony in Gethsemane, presented her with a chalice containing an exceedingly bitter draught. "Drink this chalice, Spouse of Christ," said the angelic visitant; "the Lord Jesus drank it for thee." The servant of God eagerly obeyed for the love of her Divine Bridegroom; but, before she had drained the cup, the vision disappeared and she found herself once more in her cell. This vision was repeated on nine consecutive Sundays, and soon afterwards the Saint was attacked by the long and painful illness which brought her to the grave.

In compliance with the wishes of her sisters, she sought relief by going to some medicinal springs at a short distance from the convent. There Our Lord was pleased to honor His faithful Spouse by many prodigies. A miraculous hot water spring gushed forth which afterwards bore her name, and was found far more health-giving than any of the former springs. Finding she derived no benefit from the baths, she returned to her convent, which she had been very unwilling to quit. As she lay stretched on her bed of suffering, her spiritual children knelt around her, weeping over their approaching loss. "If you loved me," she said to them with a sweet smile, "you would rejoice, because I am about to enter into the joy of my Spouse. Be not afflicted beyond measure at my departure hence; from heaven I shall not lose sight of you; I shall be your mother, your companion, and your sister whenever you call upon me in your wants." Her last words were: "I go to Him who is my only hope." Her holy and happy death, which was followed by many wonders, took place on the 20th of April, A.D. 1317. Her life was written by blessed Raymund of Capua, who became confessor to the community some fifty years after her death. Readers of the life of St. Catherine of Siena will be familiar with the wonders which accompanied the visit of that Saint to the tomb of St. Agnes, and with the revelation made to her that the two were to enjoy a like glory

in heaven. St. Agnes was canonized by Benedict XIII., A.D. 1726.

Our Lord deigned to say to St. Catherine of Siena: "If thou ask Me, 'Why didst Thou keep that sweet virgin St. Agnes in such want?' I should reply, that I did this that I might satisfy her by My providence; for having been three days without bread, she said to Me: 'My Father and Lord, hast Thou taken these daughters out of their father's home to starve? Provide, O Lord, for them.' Then I inspired a creature to take her five small loaves. They sat down to table, and I gave her so much virtue in breaking the bread that they were all fully satisfied, and it sufficed them a second time."

St. Agnes asked in faith, and her prayers were always granted. Ours are often unheard, because we doubt if God will hear them.

"We ought to be persuaded that what God refuses to our prayer He grants to our salvation."—St. Augustine.

"Therefore I say unto you, all things whatsoever you ask when ye pray, believe that you shall receive; and they shall come unto you."—Mark xi, 24.

PRAYER TO THE MADONNA

Thou potent star of ocean's gloomy deeps,
That ceaseless vigil o'er our voyage keeps,
Shine on our lives in splendor ever clear,
Mother of Christ, thy suppliants deign to hear.

Thou snow-white bud in God's fair garden grown,
Thou Sharon Rose in fullest beauty blown;
Into our hearts thy sweet perfume distill,
And make us, Mary, do thy holy will.

Of maids and mothers thou supreme and blest,
In whose chaste womb the Child Divine found rest;
Have gracious mercy on the dead we love,
And bring them quickly to thy realm above.

Our hearts are sad, fond mother, be our friend;
Our lives are lone, thy hand consoling lend;
The path has pitfalls, Mary, be our guide,
Curb thou our senses and put down our pride.

Our sins are many, Virgin, make them few,
Our souls are stained, their spotless robes renew,
Cursed Satan for us hath spread many a snare,
Preserve us, Mary; Mother, hear our prayer.

Rev. Henry A. Brann, D. D., Rector St. Agnes Church, N. Y.

AN EFFICACIOUS PRAYER

O St. Joseph, father and protector of virgins, faithful guardian to whom God confided Jesus, Innocence itself, and Mary, the Virgin of virgins, oh! I entreat and conjure you by Jesus and Mary, by this double charge which was so dear to you, obtain for me that, preserved from all stain, innocent in my thoughts, pure in heart, and chaste in body, I may constantly serve Jesus and Mary in perfect charity. Amen.

100 *days' Indulgence.*

My loving Jesus, I give Thee my heart, I consecrate myself wholly to Thee out of the grateful love I bear Thee, and as a reparation for all my unfaithfulness to grace, and with Thine aid I purpose never to sin again.

100 *days' Indulgence, once a day. Plenary once a month if said daily.*

TO JESUS CRUCIFIED

O Lord Jesus! by that bitterness which Thou didst suffer for me on the Cross, chiefly when Thy blessed Soul was separated from Thy body, have mercy on my soul, now and at its departure from this world, that it may be admitted to life eternal.

An Indulgence of seven years after Holy Communion.

APPARITION TO
ST. MECHTILDE, V. AB. O.S.B.
HELDELFS, GERMANY

APPARITION
TO
ST. MECHTILDE, V. AB. O.S.B.
HELDELFS, GERMANY
1293

Wonderful, beautiful,
Tender and dutiful,
Holiest Maid;
Joyfully, gratefully,
All that belongs to me,
Body and soul, at thy feet I have laid.
Cardinal von Geissel.

TWO holy sisters, SS. Gertrude and Mechtilde, were Countesses of Hackuborn, and cousins of the Emperor Frederick II. Mechtilde was born in the year 1264. At the age of seven years she was placed in the Benedictine Convent of Rodersdorf. Her mind was carefully cultivated, and she wrote Latin with unusual elegance. She made her religious vows in the same house, and while yet young was removed to Diessen, near the Lake Ambre in Bavaria, where she was appointed superioress of the convent, which at that time belonged to the Order of St. Benedict. This convent Mechtilde made a school of virtue; and knowing that strict discipline and a steady observance of rule are the means by which religious persons are to attain the perfection of their state, she taught all her sisters the greatest diligence in these respects. She was afterwards removed to the convent of Edelstetin. In this new situation she redoubled her ardor in the sanctification of her soul as well as that of her sisters.

Her life was crowded with wonders. She has in obedience recorded some of her visions, in which she traces in words of indescribable beauty the intimate converse of her soul with Jesus and His Blessed Mother. She was gentle to all; most

gentle to sinners, filled with devotion to the Saints of God, to the souls in Purgatory, and above all to the Passion of Our Blessed Lord, and to His Sacred Heart. She ruled her convent with great wisdom and love for thirty-eight years. Her life was one of great and almost continual suffering, and her longing to be with Jesus was her daily thought. She was the younger sister of St. Gertrude; she was at the same convent as her sister for some years. Her life was a continual exercise of every virtue. Such was her fervor at the Divine Office, that she was often ravished into an ecstasy; and so great was the purity of her soul, that Our Lord deigned to converse familiarly with her, and revealed His secrets to her. Our Lord said to St. Mechtilde: "Whenever any one sighs towards Me with love in meditating on My Passion, it is as though he gently touched My Wounds with a fresh budding rose, and I wound his heart in return with the arrow of My love. Moreover, if he shed tears of devotion over My Passion, I will accept them as though he had suffered for Me."

Once as St. Mechtilde was ill, on the Feast of the Assumption, she was unable to fulfil her intention of saying as many *Ave Marias* as the Blessed Virgin had been years on earth; but she tried to supply for this devotion in some degree by the three aspirations—*Ave, Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum.* As she offered them with great fervor for herself and those committed to her care, Our Blessed Lady appeared to her in glory, clothed with a green mantle covered with golden flowers in the form of trefoils, and said to her: "Behold! how I am adorned with as many flowers as those for whom you have prayed have uttered words in their petitions to me; the brilliancy of these flowers corresponds to the fervor of their petitions; and I will turn this to their advantage, to render them more agreeable to my Son and all the celestial court."

St. Mechtilde observed also that the Blessed Virgin had some roses with six leaves amongst the trefoils, and that three of these leaves were golden and enriched with precious stones; while the other three, which alternated with the former, were distinguished by an admirable variety of colors. The three

golden leaves indicated the threefold division of the Ave Maria which she had made during her sickness; and the three other leaves were added by our Lord—the first, to reward her for the love with which she saluted and praised His most sweet Mother; the second, for her discretion and prudence in regulating her devotions during her illness; and the third, for the confidence which she had that the Lord and His loving Mother would accept the little she had done.

At Prime St. Mechtilde besought our Lord to obtain His Blessed Mother's favor for her, as she feared she had never been sufficiently devout to her. Our Lord then, after bestowing many marks of tenderness and filial affection on His Blessed Mother, said to her: "Remember, My beloved Mother, that for your sake I am indulgent to sinners, and regard My elect as if she had served you all her life with devotion."

At these words this most pure Mother gave herself entirely to Mechtilde, for the sake of her Divine Son. As the Collect, *Deus, qui virginalem,* was read at Mass, our Lord appeared to renew in His Blessed Mother all the joys which she had experienced in His Conception, His Birth, and the other mysteries of His Humanity. At the words *Ut sua nos defensione munitos,* which the Saint read with special devotion, she beheld the Mother of God extending her mantle as if to receive beneath its shelter all those who fled to her patronage. The holy angels then brought all who had prepared themselves very fervently for this feast, and presented them to her as fair young virgins, who stood before her as before their mother; while these good angels defended them from the snares of evil spirits, and carefully incited them to good actions.

The Saint understood that they had obtained this angelic protection by the words: That defended by her protection, etc., for at her command the angels never fail to protect and defend those who invoke this glorious virgin.

A number of little animals appeared afterwards under the mantle of the Blessed Virgin; and they signified those sinners who address themselves to her with devotion. The Mother of Mercy received them with the greatest charity, and covered

them with her mantle, thus manifesting with what affability she treats those who have recourse to her; how she protects them even during their wanderings; and, if they recognize their faults and return to her, she reconciles them to her Son by a sincere penance. At the Elevation, St. Mechtilde saw our Divine Lord imparting Himself with all the joys of His Divinity and Humanity to all those who had assisted at Mass with special devotion in honor of His Blessed Mother, and who had desired to serve her devoutly on the day of her Assumption; so that, being sustained by virtue of the Adorable Sacrament, they were strengthened in their good desires, even as food strengthens and invigorates the human frame.

After Mass the community proceeded to Chapter, and the Saint saw a multitude of angels surrounding our Lord, who appeared to wait with great joy for the arrival of the religious. Marveling at this, she said to our Lord: "Why hast Thou come to this Chapter, O most loving Lord, surrounded by such a multitude of angels, since we have not the same devotion now as on the Vigil of Thy Divine Birth?" Our Lord replied: "I come as the Father of a family to receive those who have been invited to eat at My house. I come also from respect to My Mother, to announce the solemn festival of Her Eminent Assumption, and to receive all who are prepared to celebrate this feast with holy dispositions. I come also to absolve, by the virtue and authority of My Divinity, all those who humble themselves for the negligences which they have committed concerning their Rule." He added: "I am present on all these festivals, and see all that you do, although, on the Vigil of My Nativity, I assisted in an extraordinary manner."

HOW ST. MECHTILDE PREPARED FOR DEATH, AND RECEIVED EXTREME UNCTION

When St. Mechtilde, of happy memory, was confined to bed in her last sickness, about a month before her death, she began to think of her end, and to reflect on some works which she had written. But on Sunday, as a person prayed for her, ask-

ing that she might have the grace of a happy death, under the protection of the Divine Mercy, so that she might abandon herself to it with humble confidence when receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, she knew in spirit that God had drawn this soul to Himself entirely, and that He had only restored her for a brief space, that He might again abide in her. Then she said to the Lord: "Lord, why dost Thou wish her to continue on earth?" He replied: "It is to perfect the work which My Divine dispensation has decreed; and she will contribute to this in three ways: by the repose of humility, the table of patience, and the joy of virtue. For example: in all that she sees or hears from others, let her always humble herself and consider herself the most unworthy of all. Thus will I rejoice in the repose of her heart and soul. Secondly, let her embrace joyfully, and suffer all her trials and sicknesses willingly for love of Me; thus she will prepare Me a table of sumptuous delights. Thirdly, she will offer Me a joyful spectacle if she exercises herself in every kind of virtue."

When the nuns were reciting the Salve Regina, at the words *Eia ergo,* St. Mechtilde prayed very earnestly to the Blessed Virgin for the beloved sisters whom she was about to leave, beseeching Her to have a special care of them; as if she, who during her life had been so devoted to her community, so tender and loving, desired to secure an advocate for them after her death in the person of the Mother of Mercy. And this blessed Queen took the hand of the dying religious, as if she was accepting the charge of the community from her. Then, as they read the prayer *Ave Jesu Christe,* at the words *via dulcis,* she beheld the Lord Jesus showing His beloved spouse the way by which He purposes to draw her sweetly to Himself.

HOW ADVANTAGEOUS IT IS TO HEAR HOLY MASS

Once, as St. Mechtilde offered the adorable Host to the Eternal Father, at the moment of the Elevation, in satisfaction for all her sins, and in reparation for all her negligence, she beheld her soul presented before the Divine Majesty with the

same sentiments of joy in which Jesus Christ—who is the splendor and living image of the glory of His Father, and the Lamb of God without spot—offered Himself on the altar to God His Father for the salvation of the whole world; because the Eternal Father considered her as purified from all sin by the merits of the spotless Humanity of Jesus Christ, and enriched and adorned with all the virtues which, through the same Holy Humanity, adorned the glorious Divinity of His Son.

As the Saint returned thanks to God for these graces with all her power, and took pleasure in considering the extraordinary favors which He had communicated to her, it was revealed to her that whenever any one assists at Mass with devotion, occupied with God, and offers himself in this Sacrament for the whole world, he is truly regarded by the Eternal Father with the tenderness merited by the sacred Host which is offered to Him, and becomes like to one who, coming out of a dark place into the midst of sunlight, finds himself suddenly surrounded by brightness. Then the Saint made this inquiry of God: "Is not he who falls into sin deprived of this good, even as one who goes from light into darkness loses the favor of beholding the light?" The Lord replied: "No; for although the sinner hides My Divine light from him, still My goodness will not fail to leave him some ray to guide him to eternal life; and this light will increase whenever he hears Mass with devotion or approaches the Sacraments."

Our Lord said to St. Mechtilde: "Receive it as a most certain truth that if anyone hears Mass devoutly and fervently, I will send him for his consolation and defence in the hour of death, as many of the glorious spirits around My Throne as he shall have heard Masses with devotion." "The Sacrifice of the Mass," says the Council of Trent, "is the same with that which heretofore was offered upon the Cross; it is the same Victim; and He who offered Himself is the same who now daily offers Himself by the hands of the priest." St. Liguori says: "All the honor which the angels by their adorations, or men by their work, their penances, and martyrdoms, have ever

given or shall give to God, have not given, and cannot give, so much glory to the Lord as one single Mass; for all the honors given by creatures are finite, but from the Sacrifice of the Altar God receives an infinite honor, because the Victim offered is of infinite worth. The Mass, then, is an action which gives God the greatest honor that can be given Him; it is a work that beats down most effectually the power of the devil, which affords the greatest relief to the souls in purgatory, which appeases most efficaciously the anger of God against sinners, and which brings to men on earth the greatest benefits." "Could we see on entering a church," says the author of the Devout Soul, "legions of angels and Saints prostrate in adoration of the majesty of their Lord, together with the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the cherubim, the seraphim, the virtues, the principalities, the powers, the thrones, the archangels, the angels, all the choirs of angels and Saints, what should we think of those who dare to be irreverent at so holy and venerable a celebration? The devils fear Jesus Christ and bow before Him, and may not those who behave irreverently at the Holy Mass be called worse even than devils?"

As the nuns read this response amongst others, *Ave Sponsa,* the Blessed Virgin approached the dying nun, to prepare her for enjoying the delights of the Divinity. Then Our Lord Jesus —for the sake of His blessed Mother, who alone merited to be called, and to be both a Virgin and a Mother—took a necklace of marvelous beauty, adorned with radiant gems, and placed it on the dying religious; granting her the special privilege of being also called a virgin and mother, on account of the fervor and devotion with which she had guided her religious.

The Matins had commenced, when it became apparent that St. Mechtilde was about to expire; the community were therefore summoned again from the choir to assist at her happy death. Our Lord then appeared to the dying Saint as a Spouse radiant with beauty, crowned with honor and glory, and said to her tenderly: "Now, My beloved, I will honor you before your neighbors—that is, before this congregation, which is so

dear to Me." Then He saluted her soul in an ineffable manner by each of His Wounds, so that each saluted her in four different manners: namely, by a melodious harmony, by an efficacious vapor, by a fruitful dew, and by a marvelous light. Thus did our Lord call His elect one to Himself: the exquisite harmony indicated all the loving words which she had addressed to God, or uttered for the benefit of others; and these words were fructified exceedingly by passing through the Divine Heart. The vapor signified all her desires for the glory of God or the salvation of her neighbor; and these desires were marvelously increased by passing through the Wounds of Jesus. The dew which poured forth so abundantly represented the love which she had for God, or for any creature for His sake; and it was also greatly increased in sweetness by these Sacred Wounds. The marvelous light signified all the sufferings which she had endured from her infancy, either in body or mind, which were ennobled beyond all human power of comprehension by union with the Passion of Christ; and that her soul was sanctified thereby, and impressed with the marks of Divine charity.

The community then returned to the choir to say Matins. At the twelfth Response, *O lampas,* this soul appeared standing before the Blessed Trinity, praying devoutly for the Church. Then God the Father saluted her lovingly by these words: "*Ave, electa mea* (Hail, My elect one), who, by the example of your holy life, may truly be called the lamp of the Church, abounding in oil—that is, your prayers for the whole world." Then the Son of God addressed her thus: "*Guade, spousa mea* (Rejoice, O My spouse), who may truly be called the medicament of grace, since by your prayers you have obtained the restoration of so many to My favor." The Holy Ghost added: "*Ave, immaculata mea* (Hail, My spotless one), who may be called the nurse of the faithful, since you have fed and nourished so many spiritually."

After this the Eternal Father conferred on her, by His omnipotence, the grace of assisting those who, through human frailty, distrusted the Divine Mercy, and of strengthening in

them the gift of hope; the Holy Spirit conferred on her the privilege of enkindling fervor and love in cold and tepid hearts; lastly, the Son of God gave her, through the merits of His most precious Death and Passion, the grace of curing souls enfeebled by sin.

During the Preface of the High Mass, our Lord appeared to St. Mechtilde, drawing her towards Him, and imparting new graces and favors to her soul, as if to prepare her for the enjoyment of eternal beatitude. At last the joyful moment came when she was to pass to the eternal embraces of her Spouse; and the Lord of Glory, who is so great in His majesty and so tender in His love, invited her to Him, saying: "Come, blessed of My Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you." [Matt. xxv, 34.] He reminded her also of the signal favor which He had conferred on her some years before, by giving her His Heart, as He said these words, to be her consolation and protection. Then He said: "And where is My gift?" In reply, she offered Him her heart, plunging it into His; and our Lord touched her heart with His, absorbing her into Himself, and putting her in possession of eternal glory, where we hope she will obtain many favors for us by her intercession.

When her end drew nigh she returned to Diessen, where she died not long after, A.D. 1300. Her meditations are amongst the choicest treasures of the Church.

"We wept little," says her biographer, "for her glory stayed our tears. There was a vast multitude commending the Saint to God, or rather, through her, commending themselves to Him. All around were widows and orphans mourning their immeasurable loss. There were the crowds of sick, whom she had healed. She had insured their silence through life by threats that their sickness would return if they betrayed the secret of their healing; but now their tongues were unloosed, and one told how he had been blind and now saw, and another how he had been deaf and now heard. There were those who had been paralytic, and many others with countless infirmities, who

told how the Saint had healed them. And very many infirm who had come to her funeral, recovered health."

Sympathy is the greatest force of the heart of man, and an especial note of all who have done great things for God. St. Mechtilde "anointed all the afflicted with the sweet ointment of her pity, her compassion, and her sympathy."

THE VIRGIN'S DREAM

Oh happy tree to shelter her!
  A shiver shakes each happy leaf;
The boughs bend down as though they were
  Full-conscious for those moments brief:
The boughs bend down—lo! at her breast
The Infant Saviour takes His rest.

Each lisping leaf a shiver shakes:
  It is the Infant's lullaby.
No other sound the silence wakes
  Than lisp of leaf; yet from the sky
Three listening angels lean to hear,
Three radiant angels hush to hear,
Then winged by love they draw anear;
  They cannot but draw nigh.

They close around where trustingly
  In Mary's arms the Infant sleeps,
And in a hush of harmony
  Upon her ear their music creeps:
A hush—so faint and low the strain,
Like softest fall of summer rain.

And while her eyes are won to rest,
  The angels woo her thoughts away
To where the music of the blest—
The solemn sanctus of the blest—
  Rolls through the halls of lasting day:
The solemn sanctus up to Him
Before whom bend the Cherubim.

Such wealth of sound on mortal ear
  Ne'er fell, not even in Paradise,
When flaming Seraphs oft drew near,
  With melodies brought from the skies.

On mortal ear ne'er anthem fell,
Such witchery of sound ne'er fell,
Its ecstacy no words may tell.

And lifted up was Mary's soul
To heights none else may hope to gain;
Waves on her raptured spirit roll
Of joy that is akin to pain;
Oh, could that anthem ever ring
Meet music for her Infant King!

It stops! and Mary opes her eyes—
Sweet Mary opes her lovely eyes—
And fixes them on Him
Who calm upon her bosom lies.
Ah! what are Seraphim,
And all the heavenly host on high–
Their music all to one faint sigh
From that dear Child Whose peerless love
Had brought her heaven from above?

Rev. Francis J. Finn, S.J.

APPARITION TO
ST. GERTRUDE, V. AB. O.S.B.
HELDELFS, GERMANY

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1292

ST. GERTRUDE'S SALUTATION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

Hail Lily white! of the Trinity bright!
No flower rare with thee can compare.
Vermilion Rose! the Godhead's repose,
No azure blue can rival thy hue!
Rose without thorn! of whom Christ was born,
Nursed by thy care, thy milk was His fare.
Primrose so sweet! one boon we entreat,
Grace for us win to live without sin,
This we implore and ask for no more.

HE illustrious Benedictine Abbess was born at Eisleben, a small town in the county of Mansfield, on the 6th of January, 1263; and thus, as it has been happily remarked, a star of no ordinary brilliancy was given to the Church on the day on which that Church was mystically led by a star to her Incarnate God.

When the Saint had attained her fifth year, she was placed in the famous Benedictine convent of Rodersdorf, where she was soon joined by her younger sister, Mechtilde. Here, under the careful training of the nuns, who then, as now, devoted themselves to the education of those confided to their charge, Gertrude advanced in wisdom and learning, both human and divine.

At an early age she was conversant with the Latin tongue, could read and converse in that language, her reading was extensive for that age in which literature was confined to parchment, manuscripts, and oral instruction.

And now the Spouse of virgins began to speak to the heart of His chosen one, and to withdraw her from those exterior occupations, no longer necessary for mental cultivation, that she might listen without distraction or hindrance to those whispers of His love which we also, despite our unworthiness, are permitted to hear and to enjoy.

The Saint has informed us when and how the first of these heavenly communications was vouchsafed to her. It was on Monday, the 25th of January, "at the close of day, the Light of lights came to dissipate the obscurity of her darkness, and to commence her conversion." And Jesus came, as He mostly comes to His beloved ones, as she performed an act of humility and obedience.

Her sisters were not slow to perceive that their companion was specially favored by Heaven. One religious, who had long suffered from some painful temptations, was warned in a dream to apply to Gertrude for relief, and to recommend herself to her prayers. The moment she complied with this injunction, the temptation ceased. It would appear that Gertrude was specially designed by Providence to assist others, even during her lifetime, by her merits and intercession, as well as by the gift of counsel with which she was singularly favored.

A person of great sanctity, who was praying for the Saint, felt a singular impulse of affection for her, which she believed to be supernatural. "O Divine Love!" she exclaimed, "what is it You behold in this virgin which obliges You to esteem her so highly and to love her so much!" Our Lord replied: "It is My goodness alone which obliges Me; since she contains and perfects in her soul those five virtues which please Me above all others. She possesses purity, by a continual influence of My grace; she possesses humility, amidst the great diversity of gifts which I have bestowed on her—for the more I effect in her, the more she abases herself; she possesses a true benignity, which makes her desire the salvation of the whole world for My greater glory; she possesses a true fidelity, spreading abroad, without reserve, all her treasures for the

same end. Finally, she possesses a consummate charity; for she loves Me with her whole heart, with her whole soul, and with her whole strength; and for love of Me she loves her neighbor as herself."

After our Lord had spoken thus to this soul, He showed her a precious stone on His heart, in the form of a triangle, made of trefoils, the beauty and brilliancy of which cannot be described, and He said to her: "I always wear this jewel as a pledge of the affection which I have for My spouse. I have made it in this form, that all the celestial court may know by the brightness of the first leaf that there is no creature on earth so dear to Me as Gertrude, because there is no one at this present time amongst mankind who is united to Me so closely as she is, either by purity of intention or by uprightness of will. They will see by the second leaf, that there is no soul still bound by the chains of flesh and blood whom I am so disposed to enrich by My graces and favors. And they will observe in the splendor of the third leaf, that there is no one who refers to My glory alone the gifts received from Me with such sincerity and fidelity as Gertrude; who, far from wishing to claim the least thing for herself, desires most ardently that nothing shall be ever attributed to her." Our Lord concluded this revelation by saying to the holy person to whom He had thus condescended to speak of the perfections of our Saint: "You cannot find Me in any place in which I delight more, or which is more suitable for Me, than in the Sacrament of the Altar, and after that, in the heart and soul of Gertrude, My beloved; for towards her all My affections, and the complacencies of My Divine love, turn in a singular manner."

Our Lord gives His Blessed Mother to St. Gertrude to be her mother, in order that she may have recourse to her in all her afflictions.

St. Gertrude having learned by Divine revelation that she was about to endure some trial for the increase of her merit, began to fear through human weakness; but the Lord had compassion on her infirmity, and gave her His most merciful Mother, the Empress of Heaven, for her mother, so that, when

the burden of her grief appeared beyond her strength, she might always have recourse to this Mother of Mercy, and by her intervention obtain relief.

Some time after, as she was much grieved because a devout person obliged her to reveal the singular favors with which God had honored her on the preceding feast, she had recourse to the Mother of the afflicted, in order to learn from her what she ought to do on this occasion. "Give freely what you possess," she replied; "for my Son is rich enough to repay all that you expend for His glory." But as the Saint desired to conceal as much as possible the great favors granted to her, even while she partly revealed them, she desired to know from her heavenly Spouse how far her conduct was agreeable to Him. Prostrating herself at His feet, she implored Him to make known His will to her, and to give her the desire of accomplishing it. Her confidence merited for her this reply, which she received from the Divine Mercy: "Give my money to the bank, that when I come I may receive it with usury" (Luke xix., 23). And thus she learned that the reasons which she had considered good, and even inspired by the Spirit of God, were merely human; so that from thenceforth she imparted more freely what was revealed to her, and not without reason; for Solomon has declared: "It is the glory of God to conceal the word, and the glory of kings to search out the speech." (Prov. xxv., 2.)

St. Gertrude offered herself to God during her prayers and inquired how He desired her to occupy herself at the time. He replied: "Honor My Mother, who is seated at My side, and employ yourself in praising her." Then the Saint began to salute the Queen of Heaven, reciting the verse, "Paradise of delights," and extolling her because she was the abode full of delights which the impenetrable wisdom of God, who knows all creatures perfectly, had chosen for His dwelling; and she besought her to obtain for her a heart adorned with so many virtues that God might take pleasure in dwelling therein. Then the Blessed Virgin inclined towards her, and planted in her heart the different flowers of virtue—the rose of charity, the lily of chastity, the violet of humility, and many other gifts;

thus showing how promptly she assists those who invoke her assistance.

Then the Saint addressed her thus: "Rejoice, model of discipline;" praising her for having ordered her desires, judgment, and affection with more care than the rest of mankind and for having served the Lord, who dwelt in her, with such respect and reverence, that she had never given Him the least occasion of pain in her thoughts, words or actions. Having besought her to obtain for her also the same grace, it appeared to her that the Mother of God sent her all her affections under the form of young virgins, recommending each in particular to unite her dispositions to those of her client, and to supply for any defects into which she might fall. By this also she understood with what haste the Blessed Virgin assists those who invoke her. Then the Saint besought Our Lord to supply for her omissions in devotion to His Blessed Mother, which He was pleased to do. The following day, as Gertrude prayed, the Mother of God appeared to her in the presence of the ever-adorable Trinity, under the form of a white lily, with three leaves, one standing erect, and the other two bent down. By this she understood that it was not without reason that the Blessed Mother of God was called the white Lily of the Trinity, since she contained in herself, with more plentitude and perfection than any other creature, the virtues of the Most Holy Trinity, which she had never sullied by the slightest stain of sin. The upright leaf of the Lily represented the omnipotence of God the Father, and the two leaves which bent down, the wisdom and love of the Son and the Holy Spirit, to which the Holy Virgin approaches so nearly. Then the Blessed Virgin made known to her that if anyone salutes her devoutly as the white Lily of the Trinity, and the vermilion rose of heaven, she will show her how she prevails by the omnipotence of the Father, how skilful she is in procuring the salvation of men by the wisdom of the Son, and with what an exceeding love her heart is filled by the charity of the Holy Ghost. The Blessed Virgin added these words: "I will appear at the hour of death to those who salute me thus in such glory that they will antici-

pate the very joys of heaven." From that time the Saint frequently saluted the Holy Virgin or her images with these words: "Hail, white Lily of the ever-peaceful and glorious Trinity! hail, effulgent rose, the delight of heaven, of whom the King of Heaven was born, and by whose milk He was nourished! do thou feed our souls by the effusions of thy Divine influences?"

On another occasion, a devout person who was praying for the Saint, heard these words: "She for whom thou prayest is My dove, who has no guile in her, for she rejects from her heart as gall all the guile and bitterness of sin. She is My chosen Lily, which I love to bear in My hands; for it is My delight and My pleasure to repose in the purity and innocence of this chaste soul. She is My rose, whose odor is full of sweetness, because of her patience in every adversity, and the thanksgiving which she continually offers Me, which ascend before Me as the sweetest perfumes. She is that spring flower which never fades, and which I take pleasure in contemplating, because she keeps and maintains continually in her breast an ardent desire, not only for all virtues, but for the utmost perfection of every virtue. She is as a sweet melody, which ravishes the ears of the blessed; and this melody is composed of all the sufferings she endures with so much constancy."

St. Gertrude was chosen abbess in the year 1294. The year following, the religious moved to Heldelfs. The Saint was elected to this important charge at the early age of thirty—no slight testimony to her singular prudence and extraordinary virtue. For forty years she continued to edify and guide her spiritual children, many of whom had attained a high degree of sanctity. As superioress, she was distinguished for charity and zeal. While others suffered, whether in body or in mind, she could not rest, and where there was need of amendment, her tears and prayers brought repentance and renewed fervor, rather than any severity of reproof, which her office might have more than sanctioned. The importance of her work, and its immense value in the eyes of her Divine Spouse, was manifested to her by a remarkable vision, which must ever be a

special subject of instruction and consolation for those similarly circumstanced and, indeed, for all religious.

Our Lord appeared to her, bearing on His sacred shoulders a vast and magnificent building. "Behold," He said, "with what labor, care, and vigilance I carry this beloved house, which is none other than that of Religion. It is everywhere threatened with ruin, because there are so few persons who are willing to do or to suffer anything for its support and increase. You, therefore, should suffer with Me in bearing it; for all those who endeavor, by their words or actions, to extend Religion, and who try to re-establish it in its first fervor and purity, are so many pillars which sustain this holy house; and comfort Me by sharing with Me the weight of this burden."

From that moment the Saint devoted herself, with all the sanctified energy of a naturally ardent temperament, to the work so dear to her Spouse. Her convent became indeed a "pleasure-house" of delight to the Spouse of Virgins. Under her guidance the fervent increased in fervor and the saintly advanced rapidly in perfection. Many were favored with intimate and most blessed communications from heaven; one at least, Mechtilde, her sister in the flesh as well as in the spirit, obtained even on earth a recognition of her sanctity, and ranks amongst those who are invoked upon the Church's altars.

The union of the Saint with her Lord became so intimate that even the fear of sudden death appeared unable to disturb her peace for a moment. On one occasion, as she journeyed from one convent to another, she was suddenly thrown down a steep mountain-path. "My sweet Lord," she exclaimed, "how happy should I have been if this fall had brought me sooner to Thee." Her companions inquired if she would not fear to die without the Sacraments. "I desire most ardently," she replied, "to receive the Sacraments before I die; but I prefer the providence and will of my Lord and my God even to all the Sacraments, for I believe this is the best preparation for death. It is indifferent to me; for I trust, in whatever manner I die, that I shall not be deprived of the mercy of my God, without which my

eternal ruin would be inevitable, whether I die an unprepared death, or whether I have long anticipated my end."

One Friday, when the Saint had spent the whole night in meditation, and had been prevented from sleeping by the ardor of her love, she remembered with what tenderness she had snatched the iron nails from a crucifix which she always kept near her, and replaced them by nails of sweet-smelling cloves, and said to God: "My Beloved, how didst Thou accept my drawing the iron nails from the Sacred Wounds of Thy Hands and Feet, to place these cloves therein, which give an agreeable odor?" Our Lord replied: "It was so agreeable to Me, that in return for it I poured the noble balsam of My Divinity into the wounds of your sins. And for this all the Saints will praise Me eternally; for your wounds, by the infusion of this liquor, will become agreeable." "But, Lord," inquired the Saint, "wilt Thou not grant the same grace to those who perform the same action?" "Not at all," he replied; "but those who do it with the same fervor will receive a similar reward; and those who, following your example, do likewise with all the devotion of which they are capable, will receive a lesser recompense."

Gertrude then took the crucifix and clasped it in her arms, kissing it tenderly, until she felt herself growing weak from her long vigil, when she laid it aside and, taking leave of her Spouse, asked His permission to go and rest, that she might recover her strength, which was almost exhausted by her long meditation.

The happy manner in which she combined the duties of the active life with that unceasing union with her Beloved which so specially characterized her spiritual life was shown to St. Mechtilde in a vision. On one occasion, as she chanted, she beheld Our Divine Lord seated on a high throne, around which St. Gertrude walked without turning her eyes from her Master even for a moment. At the same time she appeared to fulfil her exterior duties with the most perfect exactness. As her holy sister mused in amazement on the vision, she heard these words: "This is an image of the life which My beloved Gertrude lives; thus does she ever walk in My presence, never re-

laxing in her ardent desire to know and and to do what is most pleasing to My heart. As soon as she has ascertained it, she executes it with care and fidelity, and then promptly passes to some other duty, seeking in her zeal always to find some new virtue to practice. Thus her whole life is a continuous chain of praise, consecrated to My honor and glory."

"But, Lord," replied Mechtilde, "if the life of St. Gertrude is so perfect, how is it that she cannot support the imperfections of others, and that they appear so great to her?"

Our Lord replied, with admirable sweetness: "It is because she cannot endure that her own heart should be sullied with the slightest stain and, therefore, she cannot see without emotion the least defect in the heart of another."

It was the custom of the Saint, when she was offered any choice in articles of clothing or other necessaries, to close her eyes, and then to put out her hand and take whatever she touched. Then she received whatever fell to her lot with the most lively gratitude, as a present from Our Lord Himself. Indeed, her devotion to Divine Providence was a special feature in her sanctity, and one which procured her many favors. What could be refused to one who trusted so utterly to Eternal Love!

The sanctity of St. Mechtilde was well known to the Saint, and she frequently asked her advice and prayers. Once, as St. Mechtilde prayed fervently for her, in compliance with her desire, she beheld Our Divine Lord attired as a Bridegroom, and clothed in a robe of green lined with gold. His beauty surpassed that of millions of angels, and He tenderly embraced with His right arm her for whom she prayed. It appeared to her that Gertrude also embraced her Lord, and that her heart was attached to the wound in the side of Jesus. As she sought in amazement to comprehend this wonderful Vision, she heard these words: "Know that the green and gold of My vestments represent the operation of My Divinity, always new, and always acting by the influence of My love. Yes," he added, after again repeating the same words, "My operation is always new, and always in action in the soul of Gertrude; and the

union which you behold of her heart with My side shows that she is attached so inseparably to Me, that she is in a condition to receive every moment the infusions of My Divinity."

St. Mechtilde then asked if St. Gertrude, who was so dear to God, never committed any fault; and why she appeared so ready at any moment to change her occupation, and to do, as if by chance, whatever came into her mind, her conscience appearing to be equally at rest whether she prayed, wrote, read, instructed, reproved, or consoled.

Our Saviour replied: "I have united My Heart so closely to her soul by the ties of My mercy, that she has become one spirit with Me. It is on this account she obeys so promptly all the desires of My will; so that the harmony and understanding which exists between the soul of Gertrude and Mine, and as the moment a man has willed in his heart a movement of his hands, they accomplish his desire, because they are entirely subject to the will of the heart; and as one desires in his mind that his eyes should look on any object, and his eyes immediately open to obey him,—so Gertrude is ever with Me, and at every moment is ready to obey the movements which I suggest."

THE SAINT AS ABBESS—TENDERNESS TOWARDS OTHERS—CARE OF THE SICK—HER LAST ILLNESS

The Saint was elected abbess on the 3d of May, 1294, and governed her convent for forty years and six months. In the exercise of her charge she conducted herself with great wisdom, sweetness and prudence, for the glory of God and the benefit of mankind; in charity and love towards God, in piety and vigilance towards her neighbor, in profound humility and mortification towards herself. The sick had special reason to extol her charity and her care, for she visited them, supplied them with every necessary and, far from contenting herself with consoling them merely by words, she served them with her own hands. Her religious were often obliged to interfere in these exercises of devotion, lest their beloved superior should exceed her strength, and exhaust her enfeebled

frame, in these duties of love. Even in her dying moments, her thoughts, as we shall see later, were constantly occupied with a sick sister; nor could she be satisfied until she was carried to her to console her. So true a mother was this blessed Saint to the children whom God had given her.

While, then, she thus flourished in all kinds of virtue and, like a mystic rose, emitted a sweet odor of sanctity, agreeable alike to God and man, when she had concluded the fortieth year of her office as abbess, she was attacked with illness. This illness was for her a favorable touch of the Almighty hand, who willed to free her from the ties of the flesh and miseries of earth, and to draw to Himself this noble and generous soul. She had brought up in the convent, and received to profession, more than a hundred religious; and of this great number we never knew one who had the same esteem and veneration for any person as for their beloved abbess. Her power of winning others was so great and so engaging that even the young children who were placed in the convent conceived so tender and strong an affection for her that as soon as they were instructed in the things of God, and learned that she was their spiritual mother, they would have considered it a fault and a disrespect to say that they loved either father or mother or any other relative more than the Saint.

A dangerous attack of illness made the religious fear that this star, which shone so brightly by the light of the Sun of Justice, was about to set; and, as they apprehended, when they were no longer guided by the wisdom of so amiable and holy a mother, nor animated by the brilliancy and force of her example, that they might stray from the strictness of the narrow path of holy religion, they had recourse to the Father of Mercies, and addressed to Him their earnest prayers for her recovery. And He who is so sovereignly good despised not the sighs and tears of these poor children, but because it was not convenient that He should grant them what was contrary to the immutable decrees of His Providence, He heard them in another manner, and in the way which was most useful and advantageous for their salvation, since, by making them consider

the approaching decease of their mother as the commencement of her happiness, he filled them with consolation, and enabled them to rejoice in her happiness.

For several months before her death, St. Gertrude entirely lost the use of speech, and was only able to articulate the words, "My spirit." Those who attended her in vain endeavored to ascertain what she meant; it appeared almost miraculous that she was able to pronounce them, while otherwise totally deprived of utterance. As she repeated them constantly, the religious, St. Mechtilde, prayed to our Lord to know the meaning of the words. Our Lord replied: "Because I, the Lord God, dwelling in her, have so drawn and united her spirit to Mine, that she sees Me alone in every creature, therefore, in her words, in her answers, and in her prayers, she makes mention of Me as the Person in whom her spirit lives. And whenever she acts thus, I intimate to the whole heavenly host that it is to Me alone she looks, and for this she will have everlasting glory in heaven."

The Saint still listened with attention when anyone spoke to her of God; and so great was her fervor that she insisted on being brought daily to assist at the Adorable Sacrifice, although one of her limbs was useless and the other in such a state that she could not bear it to be touched without suffering great pain. Still she took the greatest care to conceal her real state, and avoided the least sign of pain, lest she should be deprived of her highest consolation. Her life-long devotion to the Office now manifested itself to all. At the times at which she had been so long accustomed to watch and pray she remained awake and alert, although even when taking necessary food she was constantly overcome by sleep.

A month after the Saint had lost the use of speech she appeared so ill that it was considered necessary to administer the last anointing without delay. As the religious were preparing for the holy rite, Our Divine Lord appeared to St. Gertrude under the form of a Spouse of exceeding beauty and, extending His arms to her, as if to invite her to Himself, moving in whatever direction she turned her face. It was revealed to one

of the religious that Our Lord had so much love for His faithful servant that He ardently desired to receive her into the arms of His mercy and to put her in possession of the glories of heaven. The religious inquired how it could be that her beloved mother equalled in merit those Virgin Saints whom the Church had canonized because they had shed their blood for the faith. She received this reply: "Since the first year in which she held office as abbess she united and conformed her will so perfectly to Mine as to have merited an equal reward. But now that her virtues have increased with her years, I have given her a yet greater share of glory and merit."

When the happy day of release came, which the Saint had so long desired, Our Lord appeared to her with His Divine countenance radiant with joy. At His right hand stood His Ever-blessed Mother, and at His left the beloved disciple John. An immense multitude of Saints attended the King of all Saints, and amongst their glorious ranks were seen a band of virgins who appeared to the religious of the convent and joined themselves with them. Our Divine Lord approached the bed of the dying Saint, showing such marks of tenderness and affection as were more than sufficient to sweeten the bitterness of death. When the Passion was read, at the words, "And bowing His head, He gave up the Ghost," Our Lord inclined towards His faithful spouse, and opened wide His adorable Heart, as if transported with love, pouring forth all its tenderness on her. It might have seemed enough; but even on earth there was yet more consolation reserved for her who had been faithful—even until death.

As the sisters prayed and wept around her bed, the religious so favored by Our Lord ventured to address Him thus: "O most sweet Jesus! we beseech Thee, by the goodness which prompted Thee to give us so dear a mother, that, as Thou art about to take her from this world, Thou wouldst condescend to our prayers and receive her with the same affection as Thou didst Thy Blessed Mother, when she went forth from the body." Then Our Lord, with exceeding clemency, turned to His Blessed Mother and said to her: "Tell Me, My Mother,

what I did most pleasing to you when you were leaving the world; for they ask me to bestow a similar favor on their mother?" "My Son," replied the Holy Virgin, sweetly, "my greatest joy was the grace which You showed me of receiving me in the secure asylum of Your holy arms." Our Lord replied: "I granted this because My Mother, when on earth, ever remembered My Passion with such intense anguish." Then he added: "I granted this favor to My chosen one in recompense for the care which you had, while yet on earth, to meditate often in your mind and to revere by your grief and your tears, the mystery of My Passion. Gertrude must, therefore, render herself in some sort worthy of this favor, by the pain and difficulty which she will suffer to-day in breathing. The patience which she will thus be called upon to exercise will place her in a state somewhat similar to that to which you were often reduced by the recollection of My sufferings."

St. Gertrude accordingly continued in her agony the entire day; but Our Lord did not leave her to suffer alone. His heart had already been opened to her, and from thence she drew the help and consolation she needed. Celestial spirits also surrounded her bed, and she beheld them inviting her to paradise, and heard their celestial harmony as they sung continually: "Come, come, come, O lady! the joys of heaven await thee! Alleluia! Alleluia!"

HER DEATH—OF HER ETERNAL JOYS—OUR LORD CONSOLES HER RELIGIOUS—REVELATIONS OF HER SANCTITY—OUR LORD BLESSES HER TOMB

The moment of release came at last, and Gertrude passed to the eternal embraces of her Spouse. The religious, whose revelations seemed scarcely less wonderful than those of her saintly superior, heard Our Divine Lord address her thus: "Behold, now, you are to be united to Me, and to become My own for ever, by the sweet embrace which I will give to your soul, and in which I will present you to My eternal Father by the close embrace of My heart." As if Our Lord would say, that

though His almighty power had detained her until that moment on earth in order that she might amass a greater fund of merit, His extreme goodness and the impatience of His love, if we may be permitted so to speak, could no longer defer her happiness, or leave His treasure in the mire of earth; but that He desired to transport her without delay to Paradise, and to have the satisfaction of seeing her enjoy eternal blessedness.

"And now this happy, and a thousand times blessed, soul took her flight to heaven, and retired into the sanctuary of the Divinity.—I mean into the sweetest Heart of Jesus, the faithful and magnificent Spouse who had opened it to her by so great an excess of His bounty. Who can imagine the feelings which so extraordinary a favor excited in this holy soul, the wonders which she discovered, the glories with which she was enlightened, and the avidity with which she drank in the pure and holy delights which flowed upon her from the Divinity as from a fountain. We will not undertake to speak here of the welcome or of the caresses which she received from her Divine Spouse, which the excellence of His bounty and His infinite perfections rendered so amiable, nor of the joy and the thanksgivings with which the angels and Saints attended her triumph, nor of the praise which they gave to her eminent virtue; for our mind is too weak and our pen too poor to relate such things; and it is more safe and agreeable to our duty to content ourselves with sharing in the common joy of the blessed who assisted at her entrance into glory, and to sing canticles of thanksgiving to God, who, by His mercy, has raised her to such a high honor.

"This sun of the religious life, which had shed abroad so far the light of good example, shining no more on earth, and this soul, which was but as a drop of water in comparison with God having entered happily into the infinite ocean of the Divinity, from whence she had come forth by creation, the sisters of her convent were at first cast down, and in great sadness. They endeavored, nevertheless, to rise, looking with the eyes of faith, as it were, at the sublime land of glory in which they believed their mother had been placed. But, on the other hand, as they

considered the greatness of their loss, and that they had been deprived of so excellent an abbess, whose like had never been, nor could ever be hoped to be seen by them, they fell again into deep grief and shed many tears. But in the end the hope of their mother's happiness increasing more and more in their souls, they began to rejoice with her, and to beseech her to console them herself with her maternal tenderness and affection; and then they began to manifest their joy by singing the responsory Surge, Virgo, et nostras, which was commenced by the religious who had the greatest share in the confidence of St. Gertrude and in the favors with which heaven had honored her, and who was, therefore, the more obliged to interest herself in her triumph.

"Thus this virginal body, which had been the temple of Jesus Christ, was borne by the hands of these virgins into the chapel, and placed before the altar. Then, all the community being prostrated in prayer round the corpse, they beheld the soul of the Saint, radiant with glory, standing before the throne of the most Holy Trinity, and praying for the salvation of all those who had been formerly under her guidance."

While the Mass was being said for the repose of her soul, the religious who had been so dear to her prayed to God, and represented her affliction to Him. Our Lord deigned to console her by this reply: "Why are you so afflicted for the death of Gertrude? If I have taken her from you, am I not able to supply what is wanting to you? If, after the decease of a gentleman, the lord to whom his lands belong, takes possession of them, and unites them to his own domains by a just right, and if this lord has a high reputation for equity, there may well be confidence in him that he will not abandon the children of the deceased, and that he will give them what will be necessary for their subsistence,—how much more just is it, then, that you should confide in Me, who am goodness itself, and that you should hope firmly, if you turn to Me with your whole heart, that I will give to each of you that which you think you have lost in her."

After the corpse had been interred, while the response Reg-

num mundi was singing, wonderful signs of the beatitude of Gertrude were beheld in heaven, and the very walls and pavement of the convent seemed to thrill with joy.

The Saint appeared with a troop of virgins of admirable beauty. She held a lily and other flowers in her right hand, and at her left were the religious of her community who had already attained eternal beatitude. In this glorious triumph they marched before the throne of God; and when the words *quem vidi,* were chanted, God the Father bestowed gifts on them; at the words, *quam amavi,* God the Son bestowed His liberality on them; and at the In quem credidi the Holy Spirit granted similar favors. When they sung *quem dilexi,* St. Gertrude turned towards her heavenly Spouse and saluted Him with ardent love. As they chanted the response Libera me, Domine, many souls were seen entering heaven with great joy, who had been released through the Masses said that day, and by the merits of the Saint. Amongst others, a lay brother who had been somewhat negligent in spiritual things, but who had been much relieved by the intercession of the Saint.

On the thirtieth day St. Gertrude appeared again to this religious, but with a splendor which far surpassed the visions she had seen before. The reason of this was, that God willed that the merit which she had acquired by His grace in suffering her infirmities and sickness with so much patience, should appear exteriorly, and that the beauty of her soul should shine forth visibly. A book of gold, richly adorned, was seen before the throne of God, in which were written all the instructions she had given to those persons who had been under her guidance while she was on earth; to which was yet to be added all the advancement in virtue which they had attained either by her teaching or example.

At Mass, the religious prayed with great fervor that Our Lord would reward their blessed mother for her maternal love and care. Our Lord replied: "I grant your prayer, and consent that each of you should make a similar petition to Me; for I have such a good will for this soul that there is scarcely any gift or grace which I am not disposed to grant her." Then

looking at the Saint lovingly, He said: "You have bestowed your benefits well, since they are returned to you so gratefully." Gertrude then prostrated before the throne of His glory, to thank Him for the fidelity of those who had been formerly under her guidance, and said: "Eternal, boundless, and unceasing praise be to Thee, my sweetest Lord, for all Thy benefits; and blessed be the moment in which Thou didst will to prepare and sustain me to receive such rewards. O God of my life, do Thou answer them for me?" Our Lord replied: "I will fix the eyes of My mercy upon them." He then made the sign of the Cross twice with His most holy hand; and by this He gave to each member of the community the grace of giving good example, and the grace of having a pure intention of Divine love in their hearts.

We find the following passage in Pere Baron's Incendie, Vol. 11, lib. iii., c. 28: "St. Gertrude, having made a donation of all her merits and good works to the souls in Purgatory, the demon appeared to her at the moment of her death, and mocked her, saying: 'How vain thou art! and how cruel thou hast been to thyself! For what greater pride can there be than to wish to pay the debts of others without paying one's own? Now, we will see the result; when thou art dead thou wilt pay for thyself in the fires of purgatory, and I will laugh at thy folly, whilst thou weepest for thy pride.' Then she beheld her Divine Spouse approaching her, who consoled her with these words: 'In order that you may know how agreeable your charity for the souls of the departed has been to Me, I remit to you now all the pains of Purgatory which you might have suffered; and as I have promised to return you a hundred for one, I will further increase your celestial glory abundantly, giving you a special recompense for the charity which you have exercised towards My beloved souls in Purgatory, by renouncing in their favor your works of satisfaction.'"

SAINT GERTRUDE'S SPEAKING CRUCIFIX

The Virgin, radiant with a heavenly light,
Was bowed in prayer within her narrow cell;
And while the crucifix fast held her sight,
Adown her cheeks the tear-drops copious fell.

She weeps whilst pond'ring what her Saviour bore:
On Calvary's height she stands in spirit now,
And wipes with loving care the dust and gore,
That make so foul His beauteous, God-like brow.

At length the Cross is elevated slow;
And oh! with what desire His Gertrude burns
To think how she may ease His peerless woe;
And, guileless, loving soul, a way she learns!

She grasps her Saviour's image on the rood,
On which He dying lay, to prove His love;
The nails extracts that bind Him to the wood,
And for each one inserts a fragrant clove;

Then smiles content. And soon a voice she hears,
Her Jesus' voice unto her heart addressed,
Lauding her act and calming all her fears,—
A foretaste of the gladness of the Blessed.

Not him who sorrow for his fellow makes,
But him who sweetly soothes another's woe,
Like the Samaritan,—his Saviour takes
Unto His Heart, and laves from guilt as snow.

Rev. J. J. R., S.J.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Anth.—Give peace, O Lord, in our days; for there is none other that fighteth for us but only Thou our God.

V.—Let there be peace in Thy strength, O Lord.

R.—And plenty in Thy strong places.

APPARITION TO
B. BENVENUTA BOJANI, V.O.S.D.
CIVIDALE, AUSTRIA

APPARITION

TO

B. BENVENUTA BOJANI, V.O.S.D.
CIVIDALE, AUSTRIA

1292

Madonna, Queen and Mother! sweeter strains
Than thy inspiring never hath been sung—
Thou art the poet's purest, brightest dream.
Fairest! ah, break the captive's cruel chains;
Sweet are life's charms, yet sweeter far among
Thy court to see thy glorious beauty beam.

G. W. S. Norris.

BLESSED BENVENUTA was born at Cividale, in the province of Friuli, in the Austrian dominions, about A. D. 1254. The family already consisted of six daughters, and the father earnestly desired a son. Those who were present at the child's birth were, therefore, afraid to tell him that his hopes were again disappointed; but he guessed the truth from their silence, and exclaimed: "She, too, shall be welcome!" Hence the little one received the beautiful Italian name of Benvenuta [Welcome]. From her earliest childhood she gave evidence of singular piety. When only seven years old she was in the habit of daily reciting a hundred Paters and Aves in honor of the adorable Trinity, and a thousand Aves in honor of Our Blessed Lady. On Saturdays she doubled her devotions, and on the festival of the Annunciation, which was specially dear to her, she was accustomed to salute her heavenly Mother with as many as three thousand Aves. A married sister, who was tenderly attached to Benvenuta, strove to induce her to wear costly attire and to accompany her to dances and other festivities; but the saintly child would tear the ornaments from her hair and, wrapping herself in a coarse veil, seek a hiding-place in a wood at the back of

the house, whence she could see a church dedicated to Our Blessed Lady, which stood on the summit of a hill. The grass, which all around grew rank and thick, was worn away by her continual genuflections and prostrations.

To the constant exercise of prayer she soon learnt to add that of severe bodily austerities. When she was twelve years old she began to wear a hair-shirt and girdle herself with a rope, which, as she grew, became buried in the flesh, causing her intense pain. Fearing that, if she disclosed the circumstance to her parents, they would oblige her to submit to a surgical operation, for which she felt extreme repugnance, she had recourse to prayer and, presently beheld the rope lying unbroken on the ground before her. For this reason she is generally represented with a rope in her hand. She chose Our Blessed Lady as her Mother, and made a vow of virginity in her honor. She also placed herself in a special manner under the patronage of St. Dominic by entering the Third Order, and she did her best to imitate the penitential life of the holy Patriarch. She spent the greater part of the night in watching; and, when she felt herself overcome by sleep, she would rub her eyes with vinegar, thus rendering it impossible for her to close them. Thrice every night she took a severe discipline with an iron chain; she practised much fasting and abstinence, denied herself the use of wine, and took her scanty rest lying on the bare ground with a stone for her pillow. By these austerities, for which in her fervor and simplicity she had not deemed it necessary to ask the permission of her Confessor, she reduced herself to a state of extreme weakness and suffering. Then St. Dominic appeared to her and bade her manifest all her penitential practises and their consequences to her spiritual Father. Benvenuta felt great repugnance to obey this command, and it was not until it had been thrice repeated with some severity that she at length yielded. Thenceforth she was compelled by obedience somewhat to mitigate the extreme austerity of her life and to undertake no penitential practises without permission.

Satan early made this holy virgin the object of his malignant

attacks, both in soul and body. He was constantly appearing to her under various forms and, finding himself unable to lead her into sin, he strove at least to terrify her and to shake her confidence in God; but Benvenuta, whose courage in all these encounters was heroic, so humbled the proud spirit as to compel him to confess that he should be ashamed to appear before his companions after being thus reviled and baffled by a girl. These temptations and struggles, joined to her fasts and vigils, and her continual prostrations and prayers, so exhausted her strength that at last she fell ill and continued in a state of very great suffering for five years, unable to retain any food and living on nothing but water. At length, having made a vow to go on pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Dominic, at Bologna, if her health was restored, she was miraculously cured.

Many souls were delivered from purgatory through the prayers and penances of blessed Benvenuta, and appeared to her to thank her for their release. Amongst these were her own father and brother. The visions and supernatural favors bestowed on this humble servant of God were of singular beauty. The following are the only examples which can be quoted in this brief narrative. One day, when she was praying in a church, she beheld a poor child of exquisite beauty, and, calling him to her, she inquired if he could say the Hail Mary. "Can you say it?" asked the child. Benvenuta immediately began to recite it; and, when she came to the words, "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb," the child said: "And I am He," and then disappeared. Having once prepared herself with special devotion to celebrate the festival of our Lord's Nativity, as she was praying in the church on Christmas night and begging the Blessed Virgin to allow her to behold the Divine Babe, she suddenly saw a lady bearing an infant in her arms and accompanied by an old man who carried a stick. The Lady bade her return home, telling her she would there see what she desired. Benvenuta obeyed; and, when she reached the house the same vision was again vouchsafed to her, and the Blessed Virgin laid the Divine Infant in her arms, and permitted her to caress Him for more than an hour.

Before the death of blessed Benvenuta, which happened when she was in her thirty-eighth year, Our Lady revealed to her that the devil would appear to her under a most horrible form, striving to tempt her with vain fears; but her heavenly Mother promised that she would herself hasten to her assistance, as indeed, happened. The servant of God, after a short but terrible conflict with the evil one, departed this life in great peace and joy on the 30th of October, A. D. 1292. Her sanctity was attested by many miracles, and she was beatified by Clement X.

HE GREW IN WISDOM

He grew in wisdom day by day,
Close nestling at His Mother's knee;
She taught His baby lips to pray,
Her own voice joining reverently.

From her He learned our human speech,
The lessons of the birds and flowers,
Such simple love as she could teach,
Through all those precious hidden hours.

And when the stars shone overhead
And night fell soft on Nazareth,
Held fast within her arms, He read
The sacred scrolls with bated breath.

Sometimes He paused, with tiny hand
Laid softly on His Mother's cheek;
She thought a thrill passed o'er the land,
To hear the words His tongue would speak.

Gazing within His eyes, she saw
His wisdom growing day by day;
In turn He taught her Israel's law—
Her Child, Who loved not childhood's play.

But deep within her mother-heart
She hid His wisdom through the years,
And when He slept she sat apart,
And pondered it 'mid falling tears.

Marion Ames Taggart.

APPARITION

TO

PAUL OF THE WOOD, HERMIT RECANATI, ITALY

1294

O House of Nazareth! Earth's heaven!
Our households now are hallowed all by thee;
All blessings come, all gifts are given,
Because of thy dear earthly Trinity.

Rev. Frederick W. Faber.

FAIR Italy has many shrines, but the first and dearest of them all is a certain rude stone cottage on the shores of the Adriatic. Brought hither by angelic hands, it has ever been the favorite place of pilgrimage for Catholics, not only of Italy, or even Europe, but of the world. 'Tis justly so, for within its sacred precincts the most stupendous mystery of all time was accomplished. The Word was made flesh there, and began to dwell amongst men. The wonderful story of the Holy House is familiar to most of us from childhood. A brief résumé of this, and then for a glance at the actual Loretto of to-day.

From earliest Christianity the house in Nazareth of Galilee that had been the home of the Holy Family was known and held in the highest veneration. To it in humble pilgrimage had come the Empress—mother of Constantine the Great—St. Helen; the poet-lauded Tancred, the flower of stainless chivalry; the gentle mystic of Assisi, St. Francis; and the brave St. Louis, king of France. But darker days had come upon the holy places. Mahometan cruelty reigned throughout Palestine. All Christians were either butchered or expelled, and Shrines dedicated to the most sacred memories were defiled or ruthlessly destroyed. Nor could the sacred abode in Galilee

have escaped ruin, but that God willed that it should be preserved for the veneration and consolation of the faithful through many succeeding centuries. One day it was seen no more in Nazareth. At the same time it was known that a small stone structure had miraculously appeared at Tersotto, a small town of Dalmatia, on the eastern shores of the Adriatic. Inquiry proved the identity of this stone cottage with that of Nazareth, and at once great devotion began to be shown it. Within a year, however, it disappeared as miraculously as it had come, and was immediately afterward found on the western shores of the same sea, somewhat towards the north of Italy. This second event was on December 10th, in the year 1294. Doubtless, such a tale sounds unusual in this age of incredulity, but everything thus far recorded is proved by actual existing documents. 'Tis still better proved by the uninterrupted series of miracles that for six long centuries have rewarded the faith and piety of devout pilgrims from the four quarters of the globe. The present century is no exception in this respect to the five that have preceded it. Nor is a visit to Loretto now any less interesting than in past years.

For hours before it actually comes into view we are traveling the far extending shores of the Adriatic. The scenery at first rather flat and uninteresting, changes perceptibly as we near our destination. Beautifully undulating hills, covered with forests and vineyards succeed one another almost with regularity. The valleys between are at times under perfect cultivation, at others are long stretches of meadow land. Suddenly, in the distance, we catch a glimpse of a town built upon a hill, from the midst of which rises a stately cathedral, slightly oriental in its peculiarly shaped dome. 'Tis Loretto.

A moment more and we have drawn up at the railway station in the lower town, have taken our places in one of the many busses there awaiting us, and are toiling away up the steep hill. A drive of twenty minutes and we have reached the upper town, quaintly built, as all Italian towns are, in very irregular, rough-paved streets. That leading direct to the basilica might well be described as one long set of booths. It

is narrow, and nearly every house on each side is a shop for the sale of souvenirs. Five minutes more and we are crossing the large square in front of the cathedal. It is called, with peculiar appropriateness, the square or piazza of the Madonna. In the centre a beautiful fountain casts grateful sprays up into the sultry summer air. To the left, as we ascend the step, is a large bronze statue of Sixtus V., said to be one of the finest statues in bronze existing. A few steps further and we have pushed aside the heavy curtain at the door, and are within the basilica.

The very first object to claim our attention is the Holy House, standing directly under the dome, heavily encased in superb marble, and surrounded with numerous rich and ever-burning lamps. What floods of emotion rush through our souls as we advance slowly up the nave, and turning to our right, enter beneath the hallowed portals of what was once, so long ago, the house of Jesus, Mary, Joseph. What wonder that in trembling awe and love we kneel, and there in "the dim religious light" pour forth our souls in sweetest prayer? The very stones whisper to us of peace, of happiness, of love. For many long years these sacred walls contained the most perfect heaven earth ever knew. It seems that we could never tire of kneeling there and praying at that sacred spot.

A high Mass is going on as we enter, the choir answering from without. And now, as we glance around, we find that we are in a room some twenty feet long by ten or twelve broad. The arched ceiling is not the original one. This last was removed by one of the Popes and placed under the mosaic pavement. At the farther end is an altar raised by at least three steps, and in the wall back of this is a niche containing a wooden statue of the Blessed Virgin and the Divine Child, said by tradition to have been carved by the evangelist St. Luke. The figures, both of Virgin and Child, are of ebony black, and there are marks upon them to show that at one time they were gilded. The cloth forming the dress of the statue is fairly ablaze with jewels of rarest value. The altar is alight with lamps and candles placed in every available spot. The high Mass over,

a low Mass begins, and this ended, another. Thus the divine service goes on uninterruptedly the whole morning, and often into the afternoon. And how thrilling it is to hear Mass here, but, above all, how deeply impressive to say Mass. There are two altars for the conveniences of visiting priests—one within the Holy House, the other built against that wall which faces the entrance of the basilica. This latter is called the altar of the Annunciation, from a sculpture of that mystery in the marble casing of that part of the Holy House. Amongst the remaining sculptures are the Birth of the Virgin, the Adoration of the Magi, the Adoration of the Shepherds, the Espousals of Mary with Joseph. Running all about the Holy House is a broad step of solid marble. In itself it is remarkable, but what makes it still more so are two deep grooves at about equal distances apart, completely encircling the Shrine. They have been made by the knees of countless pilgrims who, turn by turn, have gone around the Holy House in that humble, prayerful posture. What an intense, living faith is this! What wonder that Mary blesses these faithful servants of Jesus and of her! The dome is richly painted, representing the various mysteries of the Holy Rosary, and the titles of Mary given her in what is familiarly known as the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, or of Loretto. On the right is the beautiful Spanish Chapel, the most complete of all yet erected. 'Tis here that the Reverend Canons daily chant the Divine Office. Their dress we notice is like that of the ordinary canons, purple and ermine, except that, like bishops and abbots they carry a pectoral cross. Further on is the German chapel, which, together with the French chapel, is still in an unfinished state. We see enough of each, however, to realize that when thrown open to the public they will be, indeed, beautiful, and fully worthy of the sanctuary they will adorn.

Two inscriptions in English, placed on each side of the nave, next attract our attention. The one on the Gospel side was written during the sixteenth century by an English Jesuit, but has become so obsolete in its wording as to be almost unintelligible. This was apparently true even two centuries later,

for the second inscription, on the Epistle side, purports to be a translation of the first into more modern English. Even this second has several old-fashioned and obsolete words. A third translation will soon be needed.

A glance at the massive bronze baptismal font, and we pass into the Hall of Treasures, just off from the Church. It is some sixty feet long by perhaps twenty-five broad. In cases all around the walls are arranged the gifts of the ages past. It would, indeed, be difficult to find a more rare, varied and valuable collection. Everything imaginable from ordinary gold rings and watches, to the richest diamond necklaces and crown-jewels, is there and in profusion. 'Tis the wealth of nations.

As we walked along the length of the hall, admiring its costly and often curious treasures, our eyes suddenly rested upon a large silk American flag, with the inscription upon it: "Lourdes, Paray le Monial, Loretto." Dear "Old Glory," how delightful the surprise to meet thee thus unexpectedly, so far, far away from the sweet home of liberty and ours! And how fitting to find thee here—here in Mary's earthly home, her favorite Shrine! Thou art a witness unto all the world of the ardent faith and love and devotion of her children of America.

A moment more and we have re-entered the church. Approaching the Holy House we go into it through a door back of the altar. Here a priest, vested in surplice and stole, takes out from its resting place and puts into our hands a small earthen dish made of red baked clay, coated on its outer surface with solid gold. It was with the Holy House when it arrived, and tradition is that with its aid Mary was wont to prepare the simple repasts of the Holy Family. How beautiful the thought! We reverently and lovingly touch it with our lips and place upon it the medals and pictures that we wish to have blessed. Then, having entered our names upon the book of visitors, we enter once more into the Holy House to say one long, loving, farewell prayer. That Mary, ever Virgin, hears that prayer we are sure, and as we rise and pass slowly adown the long nave, lingering a moment as we turn again at the door, and then step out upon the broad Square

of the Madonna, we feel that Mary's loving blessing rests upon us to guide, guard and cheer us through the long years to come.

DESCRIPTION OF THE HOLY HOUSE

The Holy House is a chamber of rough, dark-reddish stone, thirty-one feet long and thirteen feet wide, with a square window on its west side, and a rude chimney in its eastern wall. In front of the chimney is a cube of cement stone, upon which St. Peter is believed to have celebrated Mass when the Apostles, after the Ascension, turned the home of the Holy Family into a church. Over the altar, radiant in diamonds and rubies, and illuminated by the never-dying flame of sixty-two golden lamps, is an image of the Virgin and Child.

The following story is found among the traditions of the Holy House of Loretto. At a distance of about thirty miles from that city, a little girl, seven years of age, was employed in keeping sheep. Her parents who were living in the neighborhood, had brought up this child religiously, and had imparted to her a great devotion to Our Blessed Lady. She delighted in nothing so much as in invoking the dear names of Jesus and Mary, and her infantine piety was the edification of those who knew of it. One day this little girl, seeing her flock quietly at pasture, was praying to the Blessed Mother, when on a sudden she saw a beautiful Lady approaching her. She was alarmed at first, for it was a strange sight to see in that lonely place; and, besides, she had never before seen any but the persons among which she had lived. But, though she was alarmed at first, the sweet and kindly aspect of the Lady took away all her fear, and she felt her heart full of confidence. The Lady asked her to come with her where she was going. "But who will take care of my sheep whilst I am away?" asked the little girl. "Do not fear," the Lady answered, "trust me for them." She took hold of the child's hand, and they went on their way, and in a short time they arrived at Loretto. The Blessed Virgin (for it was no other, though the

maiden knew it not) led her into a stately Church of splendor, such as the simple child had never seen before. They passed on, through the midst of the church, into a gorgeous chapel lighted up by innumerable tapers, and there, resplendent with the most beautiful and radiant jewels, was the Statue of the Virgin. The innocent child was rapt in astonishment and delight at every thing she saw; she felt so tender a devotion that she almost thought she was in Paradise. With her whole heart she made an offering of herself to Mary, and was absorbed in happy prayer, how long she knew not. At length that loving guide warned her that it was time to depart. The child was very sorry to leave the holy place; but she again set forth, hand in hand with her guide. Their walk seemed but short, and she found her sheep all safe, feeding quietly where she had left them. At nightfall she conducted them as usual to the fold, and went home to her parents.

She told them joyfully what she had seen, and entreated them to take her again to see the grand chapel, whither the Lady had conducted her. They knew of no such chapel in the neighborhood, and could not imagine what she was talking about. But she would not be pacified; she still insisted to go again to the chapel where she had seen so many lamps all lighted up, and so many people at their prayers. At last they bade her hold her peace, and the innocent child obeyed; but was not the less certain that she had not been dreaming when she walked with the Lady to the grand chapel.

However, after some time had elapsed, it happened that her father and mother resolved to go on pilgrimage to Loretto, and take all their family thither, this little girl with the rest. The moment they entered the chapel, O joyful sight for her, the innocent child recognized the very chapel into which the Lady had taken her. There was the same altar, the same Statue of the Blessed Virgin, the same Infant Jesus. She knelt down, shedding tears of joy and consecrated herself again, as she had done before to that heavenly Mother, who it was now evident had been her guide. Her parents, convinced at last that the dear child had been the object of Divine

favor, looked on her with astonishment and awe; and when afterwards she showed a desire to embrace the life of perfection, they put no obstacles in her way.

She joined a religious community of which at length she became the superioress; and it is related of her, that she always once a year visited the Shrine of Loretto, in gratitude for the wonderful grace which had at first guided her thither. And more than this, she died in the odor of sanctity.

"God was not pleased," says Father Torsellini, "that the Holy House of Mary should remain exposed to the profanations of barbarians; He transported it by the hands of angels into Tersotto, and thence to the March of Ancona, in the midst of a laurel wood belonging to a pious and noble widow, named Lauretta. The report goes," he adds, "that on the arrival of the Holy House, the great trees of the Italian forest bowed down in token of respect, and retained that position till the axe, or old age had levelled them."

Soon afterwards the blessed Virgin appeared in a vision to St. Nicholas Tolentino, O. S. A., and also to a holy hermit, called Paul of the Wood, who lived near Recanati, announcing in each case the event which had occurred and making known the true character of the house. The last-named afterwards described the event in a letter which he wrote to Duke Charles of Sicily, in 1297.

THE GROVE OF LAURELS

Sweetly low the laurels bending,
  Trail their bright leaves on the sod,
For the angels are descending
  With the Holy House of God.
O'er the Adriatic gliding,
  Bathed in light most heavenly fair,
Silently the air dividing,
  Angels their blest burden bear.
Blissful dome, most dear and holy,
  Speeding softly o'er the sea,
Laurel branches bowing lowly
  Bid us bend the suppliant knee.

Dome whose humble walls enfolded
In the land of Galilee,
How, the maid whom Heaven had molded
Mother of our God to be;
Dome wherein her infant beauty,
Infant purity, and truth,
Nourished ever for mystic duty,
Waiting her angelic youth,
Welcome, by the angels guided,
Softly o'er the summer sea,—
Blest the air so late divided
By the house of Galilee.

Blest the ground whereon it rooted,
And forever there shall bloom,
Flowers with light unearthly crested,
Verdure midst the desert's gloom.
From these walls the infant maiden
Saintly glory round her form,
To the temple sweetly laden,
Bore her tribute pure and warm;
Not of gold, nor flowers that wither,
She her votive offering made
But a holier gift brought hither,
And upon the altar laid.

'Twas herself, the "Star of Morning,"
"Lily of Judea" fair,
Sweetly God's dear Shrine adorning
Unreserved she offered there;
Here returning from the Temple,
With her holy Spouse, once more
This sweet flower, so pure and simple,
Lived the humble life of yore;
Blissful dome, most dear and holy
Speeding softly o'er the sea,
Laurel branches bowing lowly
Bid us bend the suppliant knee.

Gentlest Mother, humbly kneeling,—
Sorrowful within thy walls
Sound of heavely pinions, stealing,
Softly, as we listen, falls;

While we see thy beauty holy,
  Beaming with a light divine,
And majestic Gabriel slowly
  Enters where thy glories shine;
Hear that voice like purling waters
  Falling sweetly on the ear!
"Mary, blest of Israel's daughters,
  God the Lord is with thee here."

"Full of grace," 'tis He who led thee,
  Sinless, pure, His chosen one!
And the power shall overspread thee,
  And His will in thee be done;
From thy tender heart's pure fountain,
  God shall be incarnate made,
And the tide from sin's dark mountain
  At thy holy feet be stay'd."
"Handmaid of the Lord behold me!"
  Joyful word, falls on the ear.
Sinful earth, let light enfold thee.
  Lo! the Word Incarnate here!

Fairest dome, the angel's treasure,
  Earth can hold no Shrine so blest,
And our hearts in untold measure,
  Pour their tribute here to rest;
By our loving Mother guarded,
  Here we hope her aid to gain,
And our love at last rewarded,
  Heaven shall echo our refrain.
Blissful dome, most dear and holy,
  Speeding softly o'er the sea,
Laurel branches bending lowly
  Bid us bend the suppliant knee.

M.

APPARITION
TO
ST. CLARE OF RIMINI, W.
RIMINI, ITALY
1391

Ave Maria! Queen and Virgin blest,—
Virgin most pure, behold, on thee we call,
Entreating pity from thy loving breast,—
Maternal pity for thy clients all.
Ave! we hail thee. Hear, O hear us now!
Receive the homage offered to thy power;
Invoking thee to whom the angels bow.
Assist us, Mother, in death's dreaded hour.

Marcella A. Fitzgerald.

LARE was the daughter of wealthy and noble parents; she herself was twice married, and her life, up to her conversion, was spent in the enjoyment of the riches and pleasures of the world. Once, as she prayed in the Franciscan Church at Rimini, Our Blessed Lady appeared, surrounded by angels and saints. "Of what avail," she said, "to your first husband, whom you loved so well, were his honors, his fortune, and his youth, since death has taken him from you and from them?" In a moment Clare saw the folly of her life, and her resolve was taken. The hair-shirt, the sharp discipline,—these were to be hers for the future. A small cell, a board to sleep on, bread and herbs to eat,—for these she was to exchange the comforts and refinements of the world. To these austerities she added an active zeal for good works; she served a community of Poor Clares as a lay-sister; she would run messages for the poorest; she offered herself as a slave to ransom a criminal in the common prison of the town. But as her life drew to a close she inclined more and more to contemplation. With the companions whom her example had gathered round her, she founded a convent of Beguines, and there waited for her release. In

a Vision of the Passion, she heard the words, "Arise, My beloved; haste and come." The end was not far off. She died February 10, 1326.

We know nothing more of St. Clare than that she lived in the world as the world lives. How few of us are not conscious of sins more grievous? And yet compare our penance with hers.

In the beginning of her conversion St. Clare was often tempted to return to the softness of her former life; but she resisted every impulse of this kind, however harmless in itself, by constant ejaculatory prayer and self-imposed penance. One day, having been tempted to some slight act of self-indulgence in eating, she searched with much trouble for a disgusting insect, and, having found one, placed it in her mouth, saying, "Eat, glutton; eat, then, this dainty dish." From that hour she never suffered another temptation with regard to food or drink.

"And when thou shalt seek the Lord thy God thou shalt find Him; yet so if thou seek Him with all thy heart and with all the affliction of thy soul."—Deut. iv., 29.

"IMMACULATE"

Pure are the lily's petals,
That close round a heart of gold;
Pure is the fleece of lambkin,
The whitest of the fold.
Pure are the liquid crystals,
That spangle the meadow's breast;
Pure is the snow, new-fallen,
On the towering mountain's crest.

Pure is the soul, just merging
From the cleansing font of grace;
Pure, the adoring seraph,
In the light of Jehovah's face.
But thou, O my Queen and my Mother,
Whom nations call "blessed" and great,
Art purer than saint or than seraph:—
Thou art Immaculate!

St. Anthony's Messenger.

APPARITION

TO

ST. ANGELA OF FOLIGNO, W.O.S.F.
FOLIGNO, ITALY

1303

"Her, San Sisto names, and her Foligno,
Her, that visits Florence in a vision,
Her, that's left with lilies in the Louvre,
Seen by us and all the world in circle."

Robert Browning

THE Book of the Visions of Blessed Angela of Foligno is simply the history of her spiritual and mystical life, from the first steps which she took on the Way of Perfection, to the day when Our Lord came to take her home, "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." For touching simplicity and beauty it stands among other writings of the same kind, and as it was taken from her own lips, it may be regarded as the canticle of the love of one of the tenderest of human souls under the guidance of the love of God.

These visions were written from her own lips, by her own confessor, Brother Arnold, of the Friars Minor, lest the wisdom of this world which puffeth up (in other words, the earthly wisdom of their inflated spirit, who speak great things and do but little) should remain unconfounded by the Eternal Wisdom of God. He hath raised up a woman of the secular state, bound to the world, entangled by ties to husband and children and riches, simple in knowledge, weak in strength, but who, by the power of God, infused into her through the Cross of the God-Man, Jesus Christ, hath broken the chains of the world, and mounted up to the summit of evangelical perfection.

This holy woman was born at Foligno, in Italy, and at the

time of her conversion her husband was alive, and she had many children. But, after her conversion, she performed as great a penance as her body could bear. And besides this, she underwent very many temptations and torments in body and soul. For she suffered torments invisibly from the powers of darkness, and these were all the more severe, as the evil spirits are better acquainted with different means of tormenting man than any human creature. Hence it happened that when a certain person worthy of belief marvelled much at this, and had great compassion, hearing, as he did, from this faithful servant of Christ, how horribly she was tormented, he saw by revelation of God that it was all true. Thus he, too, from that time, compassionated her with marvellous fellow-feeling, and was moved to exceeding great devotion. Moreover, the faithful servant of Christ prayed very much and was most careful in her confessions. And one time she confessed to me, according to her wont, with so perfect a knowledge of her sins, and heartfelt contrition, and with so many tears from the beginning to the end of her confession, and with such earnestness of humility that I wept, believing for certain that, were all the world to be deceived, yet God would not suffer her to be deceived, so great was her truthfulness. And on the following night, having been very ill, it was with great difficulty that she came the next morning to the church, where I celebrated Mass and gave her Communion; and I know that she never communicated without receiving from God some great grace, and, as it were, a new grace continually. Moreover, so great was the efficacy of the lights and consolations which she received in her soul, that very frequently they flowed over upon her body, so as to be seen. Hence, at times, when she was standing with me, her soul was lifted up, nor was she able to understand anything of what I was reading to her. And she was changed in face and in body by reason of the words which God spake unto her, and so great was her devotion and delight in these consolations, that at times her eyes shone like candles, and her face was like a rose. And at times, too, her frame seemed to fill out, and in face she became

glorious and like unto the angels, and she forgot to eat and drink, as if her spirit no longer lived in her body.

At one time I was in church hearing Mass, and about the Elevation I was rapt in spirit, and there appeared to me the most Blessed Virgin Mary, who said: "My daughter, dear unto my Son and to me, now hath my Son come to thee, and thou hast received His blessing." And she made me understand that her Divine Son, Jesus Christ, after the Consecration was on the altar as if she would tell me news of a new joy. Moreover, these words gave me such joy and gladness that I know not if any one could explain it. For Our Blessed Lady spoke with such humility, and at the same time I felt a new feeling in my soul, and great sweetness. Hence, I wondered how I had been able to stand when I was so joyful. And after this she said to me: "Now that thou hast received the blessing of my Son, it is fitting that I should give thee my blessing also." Then she blessed me and said: "Be thou blessed of my Son and me; and strive diligently and earnestly to love Him, as much as thou art able, for thou art much loved, and thou shalt come at last to that which is infinite." And then my soul received such joy as I had never known before. Moreover, I knew that there is nothing which so inflames the soul with burning love as when Christ comes to visit the soul, for then all the members feel and know He is present.

At another time I was lifted up, and was not then at prayer, but was sitting at rest, for it was after dinner. Hence I was not thinking of anything, when suddenly I felt myself lifted up, and I saw the Blessed Virgin in glory, and when I understood that a woman was placed in such majesty and glory and dignity as she was, I was greatly delighted, for to see her was joy unutterable. The Blessed Virgin stood praying for the human race, and I saw her in such glory and majesty that I cannot express it. And at the sight I was delighted. And while I was gazing on her, of a sudden there appeared her Divine Son, Jesus Christ, sitting by her side in His glorified humanity.

And when I understood how that Flesh had been illtreated and reviled and crucified, and all the wrongs and contempt and

ignominy that He had borne for us, and which I then saw in a marvelous manner, my delight was so great that it cannot be expressed, and I lost my speech, and thought that I should die. And this vision lasted for three days, and yet I was not prevented from eating, though I eat but little and did not speak to any one, but when the name of God was mentioned I felt great delight.

HOW SHE SAW OUR BLESSED LADY OFFERING OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE, AND HOW CHRIST WAS PLACED IN THE ARMS OF THIS HOLY WOMAN, AND IT WAS TOLD HER THAT, BECAUSE THE LORD HAD OFFERED HIMSELF SHE ALSO OUGHT TO OFFER HERSELF TO HIM.

On the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, early in the morning, while I was in the church of the Friars Minor, at Foligno, a voice spoke to me, and said: "This is the hour in which Our Lady came with her Divine Son into the Temple." And I heard these words with great joy. Then my soul was lifted up and I saw Our Blessed Lady entering into the Temple, and I went to meet her with great reverence and love. And while I was afraid to approach her, Our Lady smiled sweetly and held out to me her Divine Son, Jesus, and said: "O lover of my Son, take Him!" and she placed her Son in my arms, and He seemed to have His eyes closed, as if he slept, and He was wrapped in swaddling clothes.

And Our Blessed Lady sat down as if wearied by her journey, and made such beautiful and pleasing signs, and her presence was so good and gracious, and it was so sweet and pleasant a thing to see her, that I not only regarded the Child Jesus, but was forced also to look on Our Lady. While I thus stood, on a sudden, the Child remained in my arms and opened and shut His eyes, and then looked again, and in the look of those eyes of His I felt and had such love that it wholly overcame me. For from those eyes of His there went forth so great a splendor and light of love and joy that it is unutterable. And then, on a sudden, there appeared an immense and ineffa-

ble majesty, and He said to me: "He who hath not seen Me little, hath not seen Me great." And he added: "I have come to thee and offered Myself to thee, that thou mayest offer thyself to Me." Then my soul, in an indescribable manner, offered itself to Him, and afterward I offered myself and my children, who follow me in all things. I also offered, keeping back nothing for myself either of mine or of theirs. And my soul understood that God graciously accepted that offering and received it with great readiness.

But of the cheerfulness and ineffable joy and delight which I had when I understood that God received my offering with such great benignity I can say nothing, for it is impossible for me to make it known. Another time I saw the Blessed Virgin exhorting me to knowledge, and blessing me, and she told me of her dolors and her compassion for her Divine Son.

OF THE LAST ADVICE OF BLESSED ANGELA, AND HER HAPPY DEATH.

At the time of her death, being in ecstacy, she said: "Christ, the Son of God, hath now presented me to the Father, and these words were said to me: 'O my bride, my beautiful one! O, thou that are loved by Me with great love, I desire not that thou shouldst come to Me with sorrow, but with joy, and with the royal robe.' And he showed me the royal robe, even as a bridegroom shows it to his bride, but it was not of purple, nor of scarlet, but it was a kind of marvellous light, with which the soul is clothed. And then the Eternal Father showed me the Bridegroom, who said: 'Come, My beloved bride, come for all the Saints are waiting for thee with joy.' And He said also: 'I will not give thee in charge of the angels, nor to the Saints to lead thee, but I will come for thee, and I will take thee to Paradise.'"

And when the hour for passing away drew nigh, she said many times: "O Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." And then her friends said: "Wilt thou go away and leave us?"

And she answered: "So much have I hidden from you, but now I hide it from you no longer, and I say to you that I must go away forever." On that same day, when all her pains had ceased, by which she was greatly tormented in all her members, she was lying in such great peace of body and gladness of spirit that already it seemed as if she were tasting of the joy that had been promised her. And then we asked her if she was happy, and she said she was. And she lay exceeding joyful in repose of body and gladness of spirit, until, after Compline on Saturday, many of the brethren standing round her and ministering to her the holy mysteries, and on that same day, the Octave of the Innocents, she fell into a light sleep, and rested in peace. Then was this holy soul taken up into the abyss of God's infinity, where she received from Christ, her Spouse, the stole of innocence and immortality, and will reign with Him forever. Whither, too, may He bring us all by the virtue of His Cross, and through the merits of His Virgin Mother, and the intercession of this most holy mother Angela!

The blessed Angela passed away from the troubles of this world into the joys of heaven which had been promised her long before, in the year of our Lord's Incarnation, one thousand three hundred and nine, on the fourth day of January, in the reign of Pope Clement the Fifth.

GOD OUR FATHER

Look upon the Infant Jesus and learn from Him, as did B. Angela, the love of God, your Father in heaven, and of Christ, your Brother on earth.

"I said the 'Our Father' with so much contrition and recollection, pronouncing every word, that though I was plunged in great anguish by the thought of my sins, I yet received immense consolation, and tasted something of the bliss God grants His beloved ones. I have never found a better way for real-

izing His mercy than by saying that prayer which Jesus Himself taught us."—*B. Angela.*

The solitude of a sick bed, constant pain, incessant temptations, the loss of every earthly friend,—all these only convinced B. Angela of her absolute dependence on her Father in Heaven. She learned to love poverty, sorrow, and contempt as the sole companions which He had chosen for His Son and, by studying the life of the God-man, she acquired so perfect a detachment, and such an intimate knowledge of the things of God that the writings of the penitent worldling rank high among the revelations of the Saints.

TO-DAY

Where the seven-hilled city's towers
Rise aloft, and Tiber flows;
In the Indian banyan bowers,
'Mid the polar ice and snows;
Where the western streams are flowing
To the ocean's briny breast,
Where the Southern Cross is glowing—
North and south and east and west;
In the sunshine's golden splendor,
In the wintry shadows gray,
Myriad voices praise the tender
Mother-Maiden all the day.

In cathedrals famed in story,
Rich in many a jeweled Shrine;
And in abbeys gray and hoary,
Whence arises song divine;
In the cloisters dim and holy
Where the virgins softly tread,
In the wayside chapel lowly
Where the peasants' prayers are said;
From the hearts with sorrows laden,
And from joyous hearts and gay,
Rise the praises of the Maiden
Who is Queen in Heaven to-day.

And 'tis not alone by mortals
That such glorious strains are sung,
But beyond the golden portals
All the heavenly host among,
Martyrs high their palm boughs bearing,
Seraphs in their robes of snow,
Saints of many a nation wearing
Crowns well worn on earth below,
Sing the word that earth is singing
From the dawn to evening late;
All the courts of heaven are ringing
With the word "Immaculate."

Magdalen Rock.

So, with every pulsation of our hearts, with the warmest throbbings of our bosoms, and with the earnest desires of our souls, let us venerate this Mary because such is His will, who decreed that we should have everything through her. This, I say, was His will; but it was on our account.—St. Bernard.

Gregory XIII.—By the Rosary the anger of God ceases and the intercession of Mary is sought.

Paul III.—By the Rosary, St. Dominic averted the anger of God from France and Italy.

Pius V.—Owing to the spread of the Rosary the faithful, roused with these meditations, penetrated with these prayers, become by degrees other men, the darkness of heresy is scattered and the light of Catholic Faith shines in all its lustre.

Pius IX.—The Rosary is the most efficacious prayer for the increase in the hearts of the faithful of devotion to the Mother of God.

Leo XIII.—The most complete expression of Christian piety.

The Rosary Magazine.

APPARITION
TO
ST. NICHOLAS TOLENTINE, O.S.A.
TOLENTINE, ITALY
1304

Look down on us, thy children,
O Mother, dear, look down;
The mother's face beams kindly
When other faces frown:
Though thou art Queen of Heaven,
And reign'st in joy above,
Yet still, O dearest Mother,
Look down on us with love.

Rev. M. Russell, S. J.

BORN in answer to the prayers of a holy mother, and vowed before his birth to the service of God, Nicholas never lost his baptismal innocence. His austerities were conspicuous even in the austere Order—the Hermits of St. Augustine—to which he belonged, and to the remonstrances which were made by his superiors, he only replied, "How can I be said to fast, while every morning at the altar I receive my God?" He conceived an ardent charity for the Holy Souls, so near and yet so far from their Saviour; and often after his Mass, it was revealed to him that the souls for whom he had offered the Holy Sacrifice had been admitted to the presence of God. Amidst his loving labor for God and man, he was haunted by fear of his own sinfulness. "The heavens," said he, "are not pure in the sight of Him whom I serve, how then shall I, a sinful man, stand before Him?"

As he pondered on these things, Mary, the Queen of all Saints appeared before him. "Fear not, Nicholas," she said, "all is well with you: my Son bears you in His heart, and I am your protectress." Then his soul was at rest; and he heard,

we are told, the songs which the angels sing in the presence of their Lord. He died September 10, 1310.

In the midst of his agony the face of the blessed Nicholas became radiant with joy, and he saw in vision our Lord, His Blessed Mother, and St. Augustine inviting him to join them. Then embracing a relic of the True Cross, he cried: "Hail, Holy Cross, found worthy to bear the ransom of the world, which lay on thee! May that ransom, even Jesus Christ, by thee defend me from the enemy of my soul!" And so saying he rendered up his spirit to God.

Would you die the death of the just? There is only one way to secure the fulfilment of your wish. Live the life of the just. For it is impossible that one who has been faithful to God in life should make a bad or an unhappy end.

"The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and the torment of death shall not touch them."—Wisd. iii, 1.

On one occasion, when St. Nicholas was very ill, Our Lady appeared to him in vision, and sweetly told him to procure a little bread, and eat it moistened in water, and he would be cured. The Saint did so, and he was instantly restored to health. From this fact the Blessed bread of St. Nicholas had its origin. The Church has approved a special benediction, which can be used only by members of the Augustinian Order. In virtue of Two Decrees of the Holy Congregation—one of the 30th September, 1622, the other 16th July, 1627—it is expressly prohibited to anyone, unless an Augustinian, under any pretext whatsoever, to use this benediction, without special faculties to do so, obtained in writing, from the Father-General, for the time being, of the Augustinian Order. This faculty is easily obtained in those places in which the Order of St. Augustine is not established. This holy bread, dipped in clear water, was frequently used by St. Nicholas in his lifetime with the greatest success in curing the sick, especially in fevers, in extinguishing conflagrations, in allaying storms, in overcoming sorceries and witchcrafts, and all other illusions of the devil. Pope Eugene IV. gave his apostolic sanction for

ever to the use of this bread, when in the Bull upon the canonisation of St. Nicholas of Tolentine, he ordered that this bread should be yearly, on the festival of St. Nicholas, the 10th day of September, blessed and distributed at the churches, chapels, and altars of the Hermits of St. Augustine, to the people, for their use thereof upon the above occasions, &c., in manner and form here following, viz.:

When at any time you will make use of this blessed bread, you are to say with a lively faith and sure confidence in God by the merits of this His saint, three Paters and three Aves to the honor of the Most Holy Trinity, and then the Salve Regina, or Hail Holy Queen, etc., to the praise and honor of the Queen of Heaven, the ever Blessed Virgin Mary; and, in fine, the following anthem and oration to the honor of St. Nicholas of Tolentine, viz.:

Ant. Nicholas, the truly poor man of Jesus Christ, a virgin chosen by God, observing perpetual obedience, hath adorned the Order of Hermits with his prodigies and miracles.

V. Pray for us, O Blessed St. Nicholas.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY.

Grant, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, that Thy Church, which is illustrated with the glory of the prodigies and miracles of St. Nicholas, Thy blessed Confessor, may by his merit and intercession enjoy perpetual peace and unity, through Christ our Lord.

THE MOTHER OF SORROWS.

Thou wept'st, meek maiden, Mother mild,
Thou wept'st upon thy sinless Child
  Thy very heart was riven;
And yet, what mourning matron here
Would deem thy sorrows bought too dear
  By all this side of Heaven.

A Son that never did amiss,
That never shamed His Mother's kiss
  Nor cross'd her fondest prayer.

Even from the tree he deign'd to bow
For her His agonized brow,
  Her His sole earthly care.

Ave Maria! blessed Maid!
Lily of Eden's fragrant shade,
  Who can express the love
That nurtured thee so pure and sweet,
Making thy heart a shelter meet
  For Jesus, holy Dove?

Ave Maria! Mother blest!
To whom, caressing and caress'd
  Clings the Eternal Child;
Favored beyond Archangel's dream,
When first on thee, with tenderest gleam,
  The new-born Saviour smiled.

Ave Maria! thou whose name
All but adoring love may claim,
  Yet may we reach thy shrine;
For He, thy Son and Saviour, vows
To crown all lowly, lofty brows
  With love and joy like thine.

John Keble.

APPARITION

TO

POPE JOHN XXII.
AVIGNON, FRANCE

1316

No Voice above can plead for us
Sweet Mother, like to thine!
No love so brightly, softly glows,
Except His love Divine.

Enfant De Marie of St. Clare.

FATHER CROISET, in the second volume of his "Devotion to the Blessed Virgin," gives an extract from the Bull of Pope John XXII., which that Sovereign Pontiff issued in 1316, on occasion of the Apparition with which that Pope was favored by Our Blessed Lady, who addressed to him those words, so consoling to the servants of that great Queen; words relating exclusively to the Confraternities of the Scapular, but applicable also to those of her dear children who put their confidence in her.

One morning that he had, as usual, risen very early to pray, being on his knees, the Queen of Heaven appeared to him and said:

"John, Vicar of my Son, it is to me you are indebted for your exaltation to the dignity which you enjoy, in consequence of my solicitations in your behalf with my Divine Son, and as I have delivered you from the snares of your enemies, so do I expect that you will give ample and favorable confirmation of the holy Carmelite Order, which was first instituted on Mount Carmel. . . . And if among the religious or brethren of the Confraternity, who depart from this life, there should be any who for their sins have been detained in purgatory, I, their glorious Mother, will descend, on the Saturday

after their death, and deliver those whom I shall find there, and take them up to the holy mountain of eternal life."

These are the very words of the Bull of the 3d March, 1322, whereby Pope John XXII. made the promulgation of this privilege, which he at the same time confirmed in all its extent, saying: "I accept, then, this holy indulgence, I corroborate and confirm it on earth, as Jesus Christ, by reason of the merits of His glorious Mother, has conceded it in Heaven." (Bullarium Carmelitarium, tome II.) This is called the Sabbatine Bull, which has been approved of by Pope Alexander V., Clement VII., Pius V. and Gregory XIII., and seventeen other Pontiffs. Most certain it is that twenty Popes would not have confirmed the Bull of their predecessor, John XXII., if they had not believed that the Apparition of the Blessed Virgin, therein related, was incontestable.

The Sacred Congregation of Rites also acknowledged it, for it is stated as a pious belief, in the lessons of the solemn commoration of Our Lady, which the Carmelites celebrate on the 16th of July, and these lessons having been examined and approved of by Cardinal Bellarmine, were confirmed by the sacred Congregation in 1609, and subscribed by the Prefect of the said congregation, in the name of Pope Paul V., this approbation was renewed in 1612. Moreover, the congregation of the holy office of the Inquisition, under Paul V., in 1613, confirmed this privilege on the following occasion:

An inquisitor of the kingdom of Portugal attempted to prevent the Carmelites from stating the privilege of the Sabbatine Bull in their public sermons; the affair having been referred to Rome, the Congregation of the Holy Office, after a strict examination of the prerogatives of the Holy Scapular, issued a decree to serve as a rule of conduct for the future; this decree, of which the following is a literal translation, was approved by Pope Paul V., in 1613:

"The Carmelite Fathers are authorized to preach that the faithful may piously believe, with regard to the assistance given to the souls of the Carmelites, and the members of the Confraternity of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, to wit: That the

Blessed Virgin will relieve, by her continual intercession, by her suffrages, by her merits, and by her special protection, and particularly on the Saturday (being the day consecrated to her by the Church), the members of the Confraternity who shall have died in the state of grace, have worn the Scapular during life, observed chastity, each one according to their state of life, recited the Little Office, or, who not being able to read, shall have observed the fasts of the Church, and abstained from flesh meat on Wednesdays and Saturdays, unless when Christmas Day happens to fall on either of those days."

The Sabbatine Bull was also examined and authorized by the most famous universities, colleges and schools of Christendom; by the university of Cambridge, in England, in 1374, by that of Bologna, in Italy, in 1609, and by that of Salamanca, in Spain. Moreover, Urban VIII., Clement X., and Innocent XI., confirmed the decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites relative to the office of the 16th of July.

In fine, Benedict XIII., by his decree, *Urbis et orbis,* of September, 1726, approved of the office for the festival of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, July 16, and commanded all the faithful of both sexes who are bound to recite the canonical hours, to do it under the rite of great double.

There are a number of graces and advantages attached to this holy habit, which fully accounts for the devout anxiety which the faithful have always manifested to receive it.

A SHORTER PURGATORY

In addition to the indulgences which the members of the Confraternity of the Scapular may gain in this life, they also enjoy a special privilege and an extraordinary advantage, which is commonly called the Sabbatine privilege. This privilege has for its security the promise made to Pope John XXII., by the Blessed Virgin, and as before stated, it is inserted in the lessons approved of by the Church for the feasts of the solemn commoration of the Blessed Virgin Mary, celebrated by the

Order of the Carmelites on the 16th of July, where we read these words: "Not only in this world Our Blessed Lady has beatified with many prerogatives this Order, so acceptable to her, but also in the other world (she everywhere being great in power and mercy) doth favor those that are enrolled in the society of the Scapular; for whilst they are purged by the fire of purgatory, she doth comfort them with maternal affection, and by her prayers doth very speedily bring them into the celestial country, as is piously believed."

The excellency and greatness of this privilege will easily appear, if we consider how terrible the torments of purgatory are; according to St. Gregory, St. Augustine, St. Bernard, and others, they are not in any way to be compared to the pains of this life, nor to those pains which the holy martyrs endured. Moreover, the angelical doctor, St. Thomas, saith: "That they do exceed the pains which Jesus Christ suffered in His holy passion, which, notwithstanding, were the most cruel and bitter that ever any creature endured in this life; besides, they are not torments for an hour, or a day, as those of this world, but they may and do last twenty, thirty, or a hundred years." From these fearful torments the members of the Scapular are soon relieved if they perform what the members of the Scapular are obliged to do, and die in the state of grace invested with the holy habit.

The Holy Virgin, in giving the Scapular to St. Simon, made him a most consoling promise. She put no bounds to the confidence of those who should wear her habit. In the engagement she made to protect them there is no condition. Her words are precise: "Whoever shall die wearing this habit, shall not suffer eternal fire."

THE QUEEN OF PURGATORY

O turn to Jesus, Mother, turn
And call Him by his tenderest names,
Pray for the Holy Souls that burn
This hour amid the cleansing flames.

Ah! they have fought a gallant fight
In death's cold arms they persevered,
And after life's uncheery night
The harbor of their rest is neared.

In pains beyond all earthly pains,
Favorites of Jesus! there they lie,
Letting the fire wear out their stains
And worshiping God's purity.

Spouses of Christ they are, for He
Was wedded to them by His Blood;
And angels o'er their destiny
In wondering adoration brood.

They are the children of Thy tears:
Then hasten, Mother, to their aid,
In pity think each hour appears
An age while glory is delayed.

O Mary, let thy Son no more
His lingering spouses thus expect;
God's children to their God restore,
And to the Spirit His elect.

Rev. Frederick W. Faber.

PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

BY ST. WILLIAM OF PARIS

I come to thee, glorious Mother of God, whom the Church of the Saints calls Mother of Mercy; thou art she, O Mary, who has never met with a refusal; whose mercy has never failed anyone, nor whose clemency rejected any suppliant. God forbid, mediatrix of men, and their only hope, after thy Son, that my sins should be an obstacle to exercising towards me thy merciful Office. Ah, no; assuredly, I hope that thou wilt deign to obtain for me the grace to expiate them, and to repent of them sincerely. Amen.

APPARITION TO
ST. BRIDGIT OF SWEDEN, W.
ALVASTRA, SWEDEN

APPARITION

TO

ST. BRIDGET OF SWEDEN, W. ALVASTRA, SWEDEN

1345

Mary, whose eyes have looked upon Him dying,
Whose arm hath held Him as a little child,
O bid Him look on us all—suppliant lying,
O blessed one and Virgin undefiled.
Plead with Him, Mother of the sheep that love Him,
Kneel to Him, Lily of celestial fields;
Mary, thy love is round Him and above Him,
And thou canst move the sceptre which He wields.

J. S. Fletcher.

BETWEEN five and six hundred years ago there lived in Sweden the celebrated Governor Birger and his lady Ingeborg, both of royal descent, and (a much more important fact) exemplary Christians. Not content with acquitting himself of all religious duties, the Governor's devotion led him to additional practises. For instance, every Friday he fasted, went to confession and received Holy Communion, in order to obtain from God the grace to support with patience the trials that might come to him from week to week. Much of his wealth was expended in the building of churches and convents, and another goodly portion was distributed during the pilgrimages to Jerusalem, Rome, and other holy places which Birger's ardent piety induced him to visit.

It is not, however, with Birger's remarkable fervor and zeal, nor with the equally notable devotion of Ingeborg, that this sketch has to do; but rather with the little daughter of this noble and virtuous couple—Bridgit, born in 1302. I may as well tell our young folks at once, I dare say, that this particular

Bridgit is going to turn out, as perhaps they have begun to suspect, a genuine Saint. Her feast falls in the month of October. Having told my young friends this much, I may further inform them that *this* St. Bridgit, the author of the celebrated "Revelations," is not to be confounded with the illustrious patroness of Ireland—the St. Bridget, or St. Bride, who lived and died seven or eight centuries before our little Swedish heroine was ever heard of.

There is a story told of a visit which Ingeborg paid to a neighboring convent some time before Bridgit's birth. Seeing the richness of the noble lady's dress and toilet, one of the nuns said to herself: "Well, there's *one* proud woman, anyway." The very next night a mysterious personage appeared to this uncharitable nun and said to her: "You deceive yourself with regard to my servant Ingeborg. She is at heart truly humble, and seeks only to avoid the praises of the world by dressing according to her position. Simpler clothes would cause her to be remarked. I shall bless her with a daughter who, through love for me, will obtain such graces that she will be the admiration of the whole world."

The birth of this predicted daughter was signalized by an extraordinary occurrence. At the hour of her birth a very saintly priest saw above her father's house a brilliant cloud, in the midst of which sat a virgin holding a book in her hand. The virgin said to the priest: "Birger has just been presented with a daughter whose renown will become world-wide." In her future life Bridgit realized to their fullest extent these marvelous promises made in her infancy.

Her mother dying when she was only a few months old, she was brought up by her aunt. She was three years old before she could articulate a syllable; but then all at once her tongue appeared to be loosened, and she spoke clearly, and so sensibly that one who heard her would have thought she had been going to school for a good while.

It was natural that the child of a couple so thoroughly Catholic as were Birger and Ingeborg should early display tender piety toward our crucified Redeemer. Her devotion to Our

Lord's Passion was by far the most precious legacy left her by those truly admirable parents. Our Blessed Saviour showed her how agreeable her love was to Him. One night He sent His Mother to visit Bridgit. The latter woke up suddenly and saw near her bed an altar whereon the Queen of Heaven was sitting, holding in her hand a rich crown.

"Come hither, Bridgit," said Our Lady. Bridgit jumped out of bed at once and approached the altar. "Should you like to have this crown?" said Mary. "Yes," timidly answered Bridgit. At the same moment the crown was placed on her brow, and the servant of God felt the pressure of the circlet on her forehead very distinctly.

Bridgit was quite a little girl when she beheld this Apparition, but she remembered it all her lifetime. When she was ten years old Our Lord Himself appeared to her, and this still further increased her love for Him.

One day, as she was listening to a sermon on the Passion, her heart was very deeply touched, and she felt that there could possibly be no greater happiness than really to love Christ. The following night Our Lord showed Himself to her just as He appeared at His crucifixion. "See," He exclaimed, "how I am maltreated! Look at Me, My daughter!" Bridgit thought that Jesus had just been outraged anew by someone, and cried out: "Ah! Lord, who has treated Thee thus?" "Those who despise Me," was the reply, "and who are insensible to the love I bear them."

From that day Bridgit became so absorbed in the contemplation of Our Lord's sufferings that she could scarcely give her attention to anything else. The mere thought of those bitter sufferings was sufficient to draw torrents of tears from her compassionate heart.

All through her life Bridgit received very rare graces from God and, among others the gift of miracles. I shall cite just one miracle here to show how kind-hearted she was toward the poor.

One very hot day, about noon, a poor and sickly woman reached Bridgit's door, and had merely strength enough to

utter one request. "Some milk for the love of God!" cried the woman. "A little milk will support me; without it I shall die." Bridgit hastened to get the milk, but could find not a drop in the house. Kitchen, dining-room, cellar—all were searched in vain. "He who changed water into wine at Cana can also change water into milk," thought Bridgit; and, without a moment's doubt, she presented the jug of water to the sufferer's lips. The woman drank eagerly, and declared that she had never tasted milk so excellent.

St. Bridgit heard Jesus one day addressing Mary in these words: "Oh, My Mother, thou knowest how I love thee; ask from Me, then, whatever thou dost desire, for there is no demand of thine that will not be graciously heard by Me." And the reason that he added was beautiful: "Mother, when thou wast on earth, there was nothing thou didst refuse to do for love of Me; now that I am in heaven, it is just that I refuse nothing which thou dost ask of Me."

St. Bridgit advises mothers to make all possible efforts to increase the number of the servants of Mary; that practice is infinitely pleasing to her, for she recommended it to St. Bridgit, saying: "See that thou makest thy children be also mine." This applies specially to little children who must be nourished with the milk of devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

On another occasion Our Lady said to St. Bridgit: "I am the Mother of all souls in Purgatory; for all the pains they have deserved for their sins are every hour, as long as they remain there, in some way mitigated by my prayers."—Revelations St. Bridgit.

OUR BLESSED LADY'S ADVICE TO ST. BRIDGIT

"This is to teach thee that without my Son thou art nothing and canst do nothing, and that there is not a sin into which thou wouldst not have fallen if He had not preserved thee from it. Now I will give thee three remedies against thy temptations. When thou art assailed by thoughts contrary to holy

purity, say, "Jesus, Son of God, who knowest all things, help me to take no pleasure in vain and sinful thoughts." When the temptation to talk comes to thee, say, "Jesus, Son of God, who wert silent before the unjust Judge, restrain my tongue till I have considered what and how to speak." When inclined to work, or rest, or take refreshment according to thy fancy, say, "Jesus, Son of God, Who wert bound with cords, guide my hands and all my limbs, so that my works may all be done according to Thy good pleasure." And this shall be a sign to thee, that from this day forth the servant, that is, thy body shall no longer lord it over its master, that is thy soul."

The Blessed Mother of God went on to admonish her never to leave off praying, because of the assaults of the devil, but to persevere through them all, and to rest assured that, so long as she did not consent to his suggestions, but abhorred them with all her heart, they would be so many jewels in the crown prepared for her in Heaven.—I. Revelations vi, 94.

It is not surprising that St. Bridgit's special devotion led her as a pilgrim to the Holy Land. On her way back to Sweden she died at Rome in the year 1373.

Our Blessed Lady, when speaking of her clients, said to St. Bridgit: "I, their most dear Lady and Mother, will meet them at death, that they may have consolation and refreshment."

This loving Queen takes the souls of her clients under her protection, and presents them to the Judge, her Son, and thus certainly obtains salvation for them. This is what happened to Charles, the son of St. Bridgit, for whose salvation, because he died in the dangerous state of a soldier, his holy mother trembled; but the Blessed Virgin revealed to her that Charles was saved through the love which he had borne her, that she herself assisted him at death, and suggested the Christian acts necessary to be made at that moment. The Saint at the same time saw Jesus on a throne, and the devil bringing two accusations against the Holy Virgin: the first, that Mary had hindered him to tempt Charles at the hour of death; the second, that Mary herself presented the soul to judgment, and thus had saved him without allowing him to bring forward the charges

on which he claimed his soul. She then saw the Judge banish Satan, and the soul of Charles was carried to Heaven.

THE SEVEN PRINCIPAL DOLORS OF OUR BLESSED LADY

Our Blessed Saviour, as related in the book of the Revelations with which St. Bridgit was favored, promised His holy Mother, that whoever should piously commemorate, and affectionately compassionate her dolors, and invoke her assistance through the merits thereof, should not quit this world without a true compunction for his sins; that in his afflictions, particularly at the hour of his death, he should find aid and relief; and moreover, that for the sake of her dolors, no favor should be refused to her intercession if the same was for the real good and advantages of her clients.

A nobleman, who for sixty years of his life past had never had access to the sacraments, and who had given way to the passions of his body and mind, and abandoned himself to the slavery of his spiritual enemy, fell sick, and was in the utmost danger of death. Hopes of salvation he had none; and so desperate was his case that he would not give heed to the salutary advice of his director, or admit into his mind the thoughts of reconciling himself to his Creator by means of the sacrament of penance. Nevertheless, in the midst of the excesses of so profligate a life, he had never lost sight entirely of some small devotion and regard to the ever blessed Mother of God. Jesus Christ, who manifests the riches of His mercies particularly to such as cast a favorable eye towards her, raised in him so great a compunction for his sins, that entering into himself, and in the utmost contrition of his heart, he bewailed his past errors, made a general confession of his whole life, received the holy Eucharist, and on the sixth day after, died in all peace and quiet of mind, and with the sentiments of joy which flow from a well-grounded confidence in the mercy and bounty of our suffering Redeemer, and His sacred passion.

In effect, our blessed Saviour revealed, soon after his death, to the holy St. Bridgit, that the said penitent died in grace, was a blessed soul, and owed his happiness in a great measure, to the tender affectionate compassion which he had ever found and nourished in his heart, so often as he heard others speak of the sacred dolors of Our Blessed Lady, or happened to entertain the memory of them in his mind.

THE MOTHER'S HYMN

Lord, who ordainest for mankind
  Benignant toils and tender cares,
We thank Thee for the ties that bind
  The mother to the child she bears.

We thank Thee for the hopes that rise
  Within her heart, as, day by day,
The dawning soul, from those young eyes,
  Looks with a clearer, steadier ray.

And grateful for the blessing given
  With that dear infant on her knee,
She strains her eyes to look to heaven,
  The voice to lisp a prayer to Thee.

Such thanks the Blessed Mary gave
  When from her lap the Holy Child,
Sent from on high to seek and save
  The lost on earth, looked up and smiled.

All Gracious! grant to those who bear
  A mother's charge, the strength and light
To guide the feet that own them care
  In ways of love and truth and right.

William Cullen Bryant.

APPARITION TO
ST. CATHARINE OF SIENA, V.O.S.D.
SIENA, ITALY

APPARITION
TO
ST. CATHARINE OF SIENA V.O.S.D.
SIENA, ITALY
1370

Oh, come and see a spotless Virgin kneeling,
Oh, come and hear an angel at her side,
The earliest tidings of our joy revealing:—
The herald of the glorious Christmas-tide.

Rose Mulholland.

T. CATHARINE was born at Siena, a town in Italy not very far from Florence, in the year 1347. Her parents, Giacomo and Lapa Benincasa, were good people of the middle class, and her father, who was a dyer by trade, was noted for his piety. Catharine, and a twin sister who died in infancy, were the youngest of twenty-five children.

From a very early age the little Catharine gave tokens of future holiness; when she was but five years old, her love of the "Hail Mary" was so great, that she would kneel down on each step of the staircase, both on coming up and going down, to repeat it. Many times also her mother saw her, while fulfilling this pious practice, being lifted by the hands of angels, who would bear her quickly to the top of the steps. She was moreover so sweet and gracious that the neighbors surnamed her "Euphrosyne," a Greek name which means joy or delight, and her speech was so wise and winning that it sank deeply into the hearts of all who knew her.

When she was in her sixth year, Our Lord favored her with a wonderful and beautiful vision. She was coming home one day from visiting her eldest and married sister, together with her little brother Stephen, who was a year or two older than herself. Suddenly above the church of St. Dominic, she saw

a magnificent throne, on which was seated Our Divine Saviour, clad in pontifical robes, wearing a tiara, and having with him the blessed Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, and St. John the Evangelist. At this sight Catharine stopped short, dazed with the splendor before her and, gazing lovingly on her beloved Redeemer, beheld Him making the sign of the Cross over her, at the same time smiling on her with looks full of love. Rapt into ecstasy, the child forgot where she was, the public street, the passers by, and remained with uplifted eyes, motionless as a statue, till she was somewhat roughly recalled to herself by her brother Stephen. He had walked on, thinking that she was following him, when he suddenly became aware that she was no longer by his side. He turned round and beholding her standing in the middle of the street called out to her to make haste and rejoin him.

Finding she gave no heed, he walked back, and pulling her by the hand, asked why she did not come on. Awakened as from deep sleep, Catharine lowered her eyes and looked at him, "If thou didst but see what I see," she said, " thou wouldst not disturb me," and instantly raised her eyes again. But alas! the vision had disappeared: and the little maiden wept long and bitterly, fearing that by her fault she had lost that glorious sight.

From this moment Catharine was no longer a child, and an ardent love of God became the only motive of her actions.

She learned to know, without reading or any human help, the lives of the Saints and especially that of St. Domnic, and felt a burning desire to imitate their penances, prayers, and practices of virtue. She sought out lonely places, and there scourged herself and watched and prayed. When she was about seven she determined to leave her father's house, and lead, as far as she could, a hermit's life. So one morning she took a loaf of bread and set out very early before the household was awake. She knew the way to her sister's house, so thither she bent her steps, but when she reached it instead of going in, she passed it by and went out at the gate of the city. No longer seeing any houses, she thought she had found

a desert, and after walking a short distance came to a cave in a rock. Full of joy she entered and set herself to pray, but scarcely had she begun her prayer when she felt herself gently raised from the earth, as high as the roof of the cavern. In this state she remained till the afternoon, when an interior voice warned her that it was not yet time for her to leave home and that God had other things in store for her. She therefore set out on her way back, but feeling herself too weak to walk so far, she earnestly asked Our Lord to help her, and in one moment found herself close to her parents' house. She was received by them as if she had returned from visiting her sister, and the story of her attempt at a hermit's life remained unknown till she revealed it to her confessor.

Not long after this, Catharine, in whose heart the remembrance of the glorious vision we have narrated was ever present, and who from the time she had been allowed to gaze on the supreme beauty of her Saviour, had never ceased to hunger for a closer union with Him, made a vow of virginity. She presented her offering through the most pure hands of His Virgin Mother, and the sequel of her life will show how faithfully she kept it. From this time, too, dates an increase of austerities in her already so mortified life—she gave up eating meat, and took more frequent disciplines. Moreover, she felt in her heart, young as she still was, an ardent desire for the salvation of souls; and along with this desire sprang up a great devotion to those Saints who had given themselves in a special way to an apostolic career. She learnt by revelation that St. Dominic founded his Order of Friar Preachers for this sublime end, and from this time therefore, she conceived a particular veneration for the Dominican order. When she saw any of the Friars passing her father's house, she would follow after them, and kiss, with love and reverence, the prints of their feet. She longed to be one of them, and to work with them for the souls of sinners: and the thought of disguising herself as a man in order to gain entrance among them even came into her head. This idea haunted her the more, as she knew that St. Euphrosyne, by whose name she had once been called, had

adopted a similar device and, under the garb of a monk, had passed many years in a monastery. But God, who did not desire this of her, at length gave her to understand in prayer, that such was not His Will; and Catharine, ever obedient to the inward voice which spoke so clearly to her heart, turned from the thought, and waited in patience for whatever her Divine Spouse should show her in the future.

One day her father chanced to go into the room of his son Stephen, which, empty most part of the day, had been chosen by Catharine as a retreat during the few minutes she sometimes still had at her disposal. On entering, Giacomo saw his daughter kneeling motionless in a corner of the apartment and, to his surprise, saw hovering over head a dove of unsullied whiteness. At the noise made by his approach the beautiful bird flew out of the half-opened window, and the father in astonishment asked Catharine whence it came. "My father," replied the Saint, "I saw no dove nor yet any other bird in this chamber." Wondering much, Giacomo withdrew, pondering deeply over what he had seen, though for the present he kept it as a secret locked up in his own heart.

By this, and the sight of Catharine's daily virtues, God was preparing the hearts of her relations for her entrance into the great and holy Order of St. Dominic, which, as we shall see, was to be the next step in the life of His chosen spouse.

One night, not long after the events just recorded, when Catharine was asleep she had a great and glorious vision. She saw before her several saints, founders of religious orders, and amongst others St. Dominic, whom she recognized by the lily of dazzling whiteness he held. Each of the holy founders in his turn invited Catharine to join his order, but she without hesitation moved towards St. Dominic. Instantly the Saint stepped forward to meet her, and offered her the habit of the Sisters of his order, known as Sisters of Penance: "Take courage, dearest daughter," he said, "fear nothing, for thou shalt for certain receive and wear this habit." Overcome with joy, Catharine burst into tears and returned humble thanks to God and the holy patriarch. Being moreover filled with a new and

dauntless courage, she that very day chose a moment when all the members of her family were gathered together, and informed them in words which could not be gainsaid, that she felt the time was come to tell them of the vow of virginity which she had made, and that she begged them henceforth never to speak of marriage to her, for her resolution of belonging to God alone was fixed and irrevocable. Struck by her unwonted attitude and the energy of her words, her parents and brothers and sisters attempted no reply, but burst into tears; and for some moments no sound was heard in the room save that of their weeping. Her father was the first to recover himself, and declared that henceforth neither he nor any other of the family would oppose her wishes, but that she should be free to follow the call of her heavenly Spouse. Catharine, whose heart was filled with unspeakable joy, in spite of the sighs and tears of those who surrounded her, immediately returned thanks, first to God for the mercy shown to her, and next to her parents, who had at this moment fulfilled the dearest wish of her heart by promising that she should no longer be hindered in her entire surrender of herself to the one object of her affections.

She instantly began planning out a life in conformity with this grant of freedom: she spent long hours in prayer during the day; and even most part of her nights were passed in this holy exercise. She abstained entirely from meat, and from the minute portion of wine which hitherto she had been used to mingle with her water; her food consisted only of raw herbs, and little by little she brought herself to subsist without any nourishment whatsoever. She wore upon her delicate body a rough hair shirt, and when for reasons of cleanliness she cast this aside, it was but to gird herself with a chain of iron, so hard and terrible that it sunk deep into her flesh and seared it as if it were red-hot. Her poor mother watched all these fearful macerations with bitter grief, and one day, when St. Catharine was engaged in taking a cruel discipline and was literally covered with streams of blood flowing down to the ground, she entered her room. 'Alas! alas! my daughter, what doest thou? Wilt thou kill thyself?" she exclaimed, and as if

bereft of her senses, she began to run about the house, raving and uttering piercing cries till the neighbors came rushing in, appalled at the unusual sounds. When they entered the house, and saw with their own eyes both the affliction of the mother and the proofs of the austerities of Catharine, we are told that they knew not which to pity most, the heart-broken parent, or the innocent young girl who, to expiate the sins of others, had inflicted on herself such terrible and unheard of torments.

The next step that St. Catharine took was to try and get herself received as a member of the Third Order of St. Dominic, mindful of the promise made her by its holy Founder. Her mother after much persuasion, agreed to ask the Sisters to receive her among them, but at first met with very ill success. The Sisters declared that Catharine was far too young, and also that their ranks were wont to be filled only by widows of mature age and good fame, who were able to live alone and were capable of taking care of themselves. Lapa, nothing loth to have her daughter's plans upset, hastened home with the news, but failed none the less to deter Catharine from her endeavor. She was obliged to return anew to the nuns, though unluckily for our Saint her demand again met with a decided refusal. It chanced, however, that just at this time St. Catharine fell ill of small-pox, and Lapa, who loved her best of all her children, nursed her with the tenderest care and trembled at the fear of losing her. St. Catharine thought this a good opportunity for once more bringing forward her request. "Dearest mother," she said, "if you wish me to live, I beseech you to procure me the habit I have so long wished for, for you must know that if I do not obtain it, you will not keep me long either in that habit or any other." Terrified at these words, Lapa hastened back to the Sisters, who were somewhat touched at the mother's grief, and answered, "If thy daughter be not too fair, we will consent to receive her." "Come yourselves," Lapa answered, "you will be the better able to judge." So they followed her to the house where the maiden was lying on her sick bed, and on account of her disease they could not discern the beauty of her features. Moreover, they were so struck by the wisdom

of her words and the ardor of her desires that they no longer demurred, but to Catharine's unbounded joy, at last agreed that as soon as she was cured they would receive her into their company. Then indeed, she speedily began to pray for the recovery of her health, which up till then she had had little care for, and Our Lord seeing her longing desires to dedicate her life to His service, was not slow in granting her request. She was scarcely cured when, accompanied by her mother and other relations, she presented herself at the Church of the Dominican Fathers and there, in the presence of about a hundred sisters of the Third Order, was clothed with the holy habit of Penance. Some may perchance be tempted to wonder why St. Catharine did not go a step further if she were bent on becoming a nun, and enter one of the many enclosed monasteries of her native city, instead of remaining under her father's roof. But the answer to this is easy: God had raised up the Saint to do the work of an apostle, and for labor which enclosure would have rendered impossible. She was therefore, we must believe, providentially guided to embrace a life, which, while it left her free to come and go as the spirit of God should direct, would at the same time confer on her a religious character, and give more weight and authority to her words and deeds.

It would not, however, appear that St. Catharine herself was in any way conscious at this time of her after destiny; her one idea was to become a perfect religious, and to imbue her mind with the spirit of the Dominical Order. "Behold, thou art become a nun," she would say to herself, "beware lest thou continue to live as thou hast hitherto done, but with thy garments, change also thy way of life and customs." And she devoted herself more ardently than ever to praver and penance. She never left her narrow cell except to go to church, and her silence was so rigorous that for three whole years she never spoke unless it were in confession. The three great characteristics of the Order of Friar Preachers imprinted themselves indelibly on her soul during the years which followed her entrance into it, for, to her practices of prayer and penance, she joined the most burning desire for the salvation of souls, thus proving herself

a worthy daughter and fervent disciple of St. Dominic, who left as a heritage to his spiritual sons, contemplation, mortification, and the apostolic life. During this time also which her after life shows to be one of preparation, she had long and terrible combats to endure against the spirit of darkness. He assailed her with every form of temptation, and assaulted the spouse of Christ with the foulest sights and imaginations; but the only outcome of his impotent malice was to ground her still more firmly in heroic virtue and to win for her the choicest favors of her Lord. Once, after one of the most terrible combats she had had to undergo, Our Divine Saviour appeared to her as if hanging on the Cross, and consoled her with most sweet and loving words. Emboldened by His condescension, St. Catharine ventured to ask Him, "Lord where wert Thou when my heart was so troubled with these loathsome temptations?" "My daughter," replied her most gracious Saviour, "I was in thy heart." And soon after the vision vanished, leaving a heavenly joy lingering for many days in her soul. Nor was this favor the greatest of those bestowed on her in reward for her constancy, and for the humility which had rendered her proof against all the darts of the enemy. After many other celestial visitations, too long to dwell on in this short sketch, her Lord granted her one of the highest favors He has ever vouchsafed to give to any of His saints. One day, just before Lent, He showed Himself to her and after conversing with her for some moments, was joined by Our Blessed Lady and the Beloved Desciple, with St. Paul and St. Dominic. Lastly came the royal psalmist, King David, bearing his harp, on which he began to play tunes of unearthly sweetness. Then the most Holy Mother of God advanced towards Catharine, and taking her by the hand, led her to her Divine Son, and begged Him to condescend to espouse her to Himself. He consented by bowing His head, and taking out a ring set with four precious pearls with a marvellously rich diamond in the centre, put it on the finger of her right hand, saying these words: "Behold I here espouse thee to Myself in faith, which shall endure in thee from this time forward, evermore, without change or

shadow, until the time when thou shalt celebrate with Me in heaven the eternal nuptials. Wherefore, from henceforth, take courage and be not dismayed, but do whatever thou art told, for now that thou are armed with an invisible strength, thou wilt be able to withstand and overcome all thy enemies." Then the vision disappeared, but the mystic ring remained on the finger of Catharine, though visible to herself only.

Thus was the spouse of Christ made ready to begin the work to which she was destined. Clothed in the habit of the Dominican Order, her virtue tried and made perfect in infirmity, and finally loaded with celestial favors by Our Lord Jesus Christ, she was now to appear before the eyes of men, and to take part in the active work for souls in which she had hitherto only concurred by her prayers and penances.

The first interruption in St. Catharine's hitherto solitary and secluded life came from our Lord Himself. One day after she had been long engaged in prayer, He told her that she was to go down and join the family at dinner, and that she should after that be again free to return to Him. St. Catharine was thunderstruck at this announcement, and at first besought Our Lord to let her stay with Him, pleading her inability to eat. But Our Lord stood firm and told her that she was now about to put in practice the precept of loving her neighbor for the sake of God, that she had always sighed and prayed for the salvation of souls, and that leaving her wonted solitude was the first step to more active work in their behalf. St. Catharine then hastened to obey, and though the prospect of again mixing in intercourse with others was by no means pleasing to her, took her place at the family repast. This first step was followed by fresh exertions and weanings from her hermitical way of life, and she began anew to perform many household works, such as sweeping, washing, and cooking. But this outward change made none in her heart; whenever she could, she flew back to her cell, and all day long her remembrance of the presence of God in her soul was so unbroken that she kept up the most intimate communication with Him despite all external employments.

Her accustomed ecstasies, far from being suspended were more frequent and wonderful than ever, and became more apparent to others. When her mother, Lapa, saw her for the first time in a trance, she was so alarmed at the stiffness and contraction of her limbs, that she ran to her and pulling her violently by her neck, which was somewhat awry, tried to straighten it by force. Happily, however, a bystander, seeing the danger of what she was doing, uttered a cry, and Lapa gave over her well-meant but injudicious endeavors. When St. Catharine shortly after returned to herself, she felt as if her neck had been all but broken, and declared to Brother Raymund, her ghostly father, that if her mother had continued her efforts any longer, she would certainly have caused her death.

Another day, when St. Catharine was preparing the family supper, she sat down by the hearth to turn the spit, but little by little her arm ceased to move, and soon fell helplessly by her side, while her soul was ravished in heavenly contemplation. Lisa, her sister-in-law, saw what was the matter, and quietly took her place leaving her to the enjoyment of celestial favors. When the meat was roasted, Lisa placed it on the table, and, after serving the others took her own repast, Catharine meanwhile being absorbed in ecstasy. The meal having come to an end, the family dispersed and Lisa, seeing it was useless to wait for her, went away to see after her children and husband. After a long absence she went back to the kitchen to see if Catharine had yet come to her senses, but what was her dismay to see the Saint lying motionless on the hot burning coals. Screaming as loudly as she could, "Alas, alas, Catharine is burnt," she rushed to her and caught her up as quickly as she could. Her alarm, however, was changed to wonder when she could discover neither on her person nor on her clothes any traces of fire. Her garments were not even singed, though the fire that day had been fiercer than usual, nor was there any smell of burning. The fire of God's holy love which burnt in her heart had prevented the outward flames having any effect on her bodily frame.

This was not St. Catharine's only escape from fire at this

period. Once when she was praying in the Church of St. Dominic, being again rapt in ecstasy, she leaned her head against a pillar on which there stood a wax candle. By some chance the lighted candle fell down upon her head, and there it remained burning till it was all wasted away, and yet did no harm to the Saint, nor even to the veil or wimple with which she was covered. Twice, too, she was thrown by the fiend himself into the fire; the second time he dashed her with such force into a pan of burning coals, that the pan, which was of earthenware, was completely smashed. But St. Catharine, who was not in the least hurt or daunted, got quickly up and said merrily to a woman who was standing by: "See what work Malatasca (for so she called the demon) maketh here."

Having now once more resumed her place in her own family, St. Catharine's next step was to undertake more active works in favor of the poor and sick of the neighborhood. Possessing nothing of her own, she craved her father's leave to give away food and money, and obtained from him a large and hearty consent. Before all his household, "Let no one," he said, "hinder my beloved daughter in the distribution of alms; I give her full control over all that is in the house." It need scarcely be said that St. Catharine took full advantage of this permission, and gave away whatever she could lay her hands on so lavishly that murmurs began to arise in the family. One day especially, all were much disturbed when it was discovered that a large barrel of wine which they had hoped would last for a long time, was found empty. In fact the discontent was so loudly expressed that Giacomo was much distressed. Catharine, however, asking him the cause of his trouble, bade him fear nothing and going to the cask and there kneeling down, besought Our Lord not to allow the alms she had given to the poor to become a cause of dissension in the family. She then made the sign of the cross over the barrel, and the wine began to flow again in abundance. On numerous other occasions also did God come to the help of His faithful servant. Once when she was confined to bed by sickness, she learnt that a poor widow in the city was dying of hunger, as well as her two children.

Touched with pity, Catharine implored Our Lord to give her strength enough to come to their rescue. She then arose though it was not yet dawn, and loaded herself with every species of provision. As soon as the bell, before whose chiming none might stir out, sounded, she set forth on her errand of charity, and had nearly reached the poor woman's abode when her burden, which had hitherto seemed quite light, became so heavy that she felt as if she could not take another step. Again she turned to God with humble trust in His mercy, and entreated Him to enable her to fulfil her charitable task; and being once more strengthened, she reached the house, and finding the door open, went softly in and put down her load. She was turning homewards when for the second time all her strength forsook her, and seeing that it was the will of her Divine Spouse thus, as it were, to sport with her she spoke to Him with a mixture of familiarity and reverence: "O my sweet Saviour, why makest Thou game of me in this manner—the day cometh on, and dost Thou wish that all the world should see my folly? Grant me, I beseech Thee, strength to go home again." Then she tried to walk along but found herself barely able to creep; the widow, too, who had been awakened by the noise, came down into the street and there recognized her benefactress. At last, however, Our Lord heard the prayer of St. Catharine, and she was enabled to reach home before the broad daylight came on.

Twice Our Lord Himself appeared to her in the form of a beggar, and asked alms from her hand, and both times He came to her during the following night, commending her for her charity and promising her eternal gifts in exchange; in fact it would be impossible in this short life to enumerate all the wonderful events which now became almost of daily occurrence in the history of our Saint.

The course of our story now at length leads us to the affairs of the Church itself, for whose special aid St. Catharine had doubtless been marked out by God from the first. There had been existing in Italy for a long time an undercurrent secretly at work against the Holy See. The Pope, residing himself at

Avignon, had appointed legates as rulers of the Pontifical States, or to represent him in the various republics of the peninsula. These were for the most part foreigners, and as such universally hated. The plague of 1374 had been followed by a terrible famine in Tuscany, and on account of some difficulty in procuring corn from the Papal States for the use of the Florentines, the population, having at their head an ex-captain of the Pope's army, flew to arms and openly defied the authority of the then reigning Pontiff Gregory XI. A sharp struggle ensued; the populace profaned churches and monasteries, massacred priests, and in their fury flayed alive the Papal Nuncio, and actually buried him before life was extinct. Sixty strong places or fortresses belonging to the church moreover, fell into the hands of the Florentines.

St. Catharine had watched the storm gathering from Pisa where she was at that time, and when it burst used every effort to keep Pisa, Lucca, and Siena within the bounds of duty. She, moreover, herself wrote two letters to the Holy Father imploring his indulgence, which letters exercised so salutary an influence on the mind of the Pontiff that he sent deputies to Florence bearing propositions of peace. Unhappily an act of treason on the part of the authorities put a stop to these negotiations, and soon affairs were worse than ever. Recognizing at last, however, the necessity of submission, the Florentine rulers sent for Catharine and implored her to go herself to Avignon, there to try and make terms of peace. The Saint at length consented, and set out for the Papal Court, where she was received by Pope Gregory with the greatest honor. It would be too long to go into all the details of what followed; suffice it to say that after long and strenuous efforts, and being herself once nearly murdered by the Florentines to whose city she had returned during the course of the negotiations, she had the happiness of seeing peace restored between the reigning Pontiff and the inhabitants of the beautiful though rebellious Florence.

This work, great as it was, was not, as is probably well known to most of our readers, by any means the crowning achievement

of St. Catharine. While at Avignon she had spoken to the Holy Father with the greatest openness and courage on the abuses of many kinds which she saw around her, both among pastors and people. More than this she had vehemently exhorted him to proclaim a new crusade against the infidels and had seconded the efforts which he made at her entreaty, with all her power. She wrote to many princes of Europe, and strove by words of burning eloquence to stir up in their hearts an ardor akin to her own and there was every appearance of her succeeding, when the premature, and, to human eyes, disastrous death of Gregory, put a stop to her efforts in this direction. The crusade did not take place, and the reforms she had worked for were delayed, but it was granted to her to see the fulfilment of the third of the great designs with which the love of Holy Church had inspired her. It was permitted to her after long and painful labors to be the means of restoring the Popes to Rome from their exile at Avignon. In 1377, after an absence of the Papal Court for 72 years, Gregory XI. made his solemn entry into his capital, and Rome, so long widowed, seemed delirious with joy at once more welcoming its Pontiff. But she who by her prayers and exhortations to Gregory had been the instrument of this great work was not on that day of public rejoicing to be seen amid the exulting throng. From Genoa, where she had repaired to meet and encourage the Pope on his way to Rome, she had hastened back to her native place, there in the silence of her poor cell to pour out her ardent prayers for the welfare of Christ's Church and for the guidance of His representative on earth. Fain would she have ended her days thus, but it was not long before, in the terrible calamities which again overtook the church, she was summoned by the Sovereign Pontiff to be his counsellor, and to prove herself the stay and pillar of Christendom in these moments of peril.

Urban VI. who had succeeded Gregory XI. on the throne was of harsh and unbending character; and the French cardinals, alienated by his severity, found a pretext for leaving Rome and proceeding to Fondi, in the kingdom of Naples, there

elected an anti-pope, whom they proclaimed under the name of Clement VII.

This was the beginning of the great schism which for seventy years tore the robe of the mystic Bride of the Son of God, and at one time no less than three popes, two, of course, anti-popes, presented their claims to the eyes of the bewildered world. During the thick of these troubles Urban sent for Catharine to come to Rome, and yielding obedience the Saint took up her abode in the Holy city. It were vain in these few pages to try and enumerate all the labors she undertook to bring back the erring to their allegiance to the one lawful successor of St. Peter. Firm in her adherence to Urban, her voice was ever raised in his defence. Once even, during a consistory, the Pope sent for her, and ordered her to address the assembled cardinals. She spoke of the appalling evils caused by schism with such inspired truth and courage, that the Pontiff at the end summed up her discourse, and declared that all present, including himself, had been brought to shame by the words of the intrepid virgin. "Our timidity is confounded by her courage," he exclaimed.

St. Catharine had not the happiness of living to see the conclusion of the troubles of the church, but she foretold their end before she died, and bade her disciples rejoice in the coming triumph of the cause of God. She continued to live on in Rome, where a spiritual family had gathered round her, and the details of her life there with its records of her states of supernatural prayer, of her miracles and of the Divine favors showered upon her, are not among the least remarkable of her marvellous career.

Though the events which filled St. Catharine's life were so many and so wonderful, yet they were all crowded into a very short space of time, for she had but just completed her thirty-third year when she was called to her heavenly reward.

As has before been said, she led a life of wonderful union and close intercourse with God after she had taken up her abode within the walls of Rome, and one day in the ardor of her soul, she exclaimed, "O Sovereign Clemency, behold my

body, I offer it up unto Thee as an anvil on which are to be bruised the sins of the wicked—I offer Thee my life, now, or whenever Thou pleasest."

Our lord was pleased to take her at her word, and for four months her body was as a target, receiving all the shafts of the Divine wrath. Once after having by her prayers and remonstrances with the rebels, quelled an insurrection against the Pope, our Lord said to her, "Leave this people to their fate, for my justice requires that I should no longer suffer their iniquities." Catharine nevertheless pleaded their cause so earnestly that they were spared, as formerly the ungrateful Israelites at the prayer of Moses, but not with impunity to herself. The powers of hell had leave to torment her virginal body and in their rabid fury, practised such cruelties upon her, that, according to the accounts of eye witnesses, it would be impossible, without having seen them, to form any idea of their intensity.

More like a phantom than a human being, parched with thirst, and yet unable to swallow a single drop of water; consumed by an interior fire which scorched her at every breath, St. Catharine never ceased from her wonted activity, nor to show on her face her habitual expression of heavenly joy. During Lent, after a most mysterious visitation from God, her sufferings increased to that degree, that her continuance in life was a daily miracle. No longer able to go out in the early morning, Mass was said for her every day in the little chapel attached to her house, and by the express desire of Our Lord, she also communicated daily. After this, gathering up all her remaining strength, she would force herself to go to St. Peter's to pray for the Church, and it was while thus engaged that she there received the intimation of her approaching end.

During the Lent of this same year, or rather from the third Sunday of that holy season, for eight consecutive weeks she was so consumed by sufferings, both interior and exterior, that during all that time she was unable to lift her head. Lying stretched on planks she appeared to be already in her coffin; and it was only when Holy Communion was brought to her that

her almost inanimate frame seemed to be re-inkindled with a breath of life. Once, when Brother Raymund was saying Mass in her chamber, at the moment of Communion, St. Catharine, who had been lying perfectly motionless, suddenly arose, and to the stupefaction of the by-standers, walked unaided to the altar, and then knelt down to receive the Adorable Sacrament. After having communicated, she fell into the ecstasy customary with her on receiving the Body of Our Lord, and when that had ceased, she was found incapable of regaining her bed alone, so that her companions were obliged to carry her to it.

And now the end was close at hand—that death "precious in the sight of the Lord," of which, however, space will only allow us to say a few brief words. Besides the thought of the Church which never left her, St. Catharine's last days were filled with solicitude for her beloved spiritual family who, collected round their mother, were watching in deep sorrow the approach of her last moments. Prayer, obedience, charity to each other, and devotedness to the Church and Sovereign Pontiff, were the themes of her parting instructions to them. Especially did she dwell upon the last point, telling them at the same time that she considered being allowed to die for the Church, as she undoubtedly was doing, the greatest grace that had ever been bestowed upon her. On the Sunday before the Ascension she received Extreme Unction, and afterwards it seemed as if the demons were allowed for the last time to assault her. She was heard denying accusations, and sometimes she appeared to turn disdainfully from an invisible speaker. After which, she repeated no less than sixty times, "I have sinned, Lord, have mercy on me." Before her were placed some relics with a cross in the middle, and fastening her eyes on the holy symbol she made aloud a confession of all the sins of her life. She then begged for absolution and for the plenary indulgence granted to her for her last moments by Gregory XI. and Urban VI. Several times also she asked her mother's blessing, for Lapa, ever faithful, was watching by her beloved daughter. But the poor mother, overwhelmed with grief, re-

plied by begging Catharine to obtain by her prayers that she might not offend God in her sorrow. Then the dying Saint prayed aloud for the Pope, the Holy Church, and for all those confided to her care. Finally she made the sign of the Cross, and having implored the help of the Precious Blood, she uttered the words, "O Blood, O Blood! Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," and with a countenance radiant as that of an angel, she bowed her head, like even in her death to the One Supreme Object of her affections. Her precious death took place on the 29th of April, 1380, her thirty-third year being barely completed.

We have been obliged to pass over in silence the accounts of the many and heroic virtues displayed during the last months of her earthly pilgrimage; we have not been able to dwell on her wondrous love of the Blessed Sacrament, her devotion to the Precious Blood, to the Virgin Mother of her Divine Spouse, and to the saints, His friends and imitators. We have not paused to offer to our readers any of the sayings of heavenly wisdom which fell from her lips and were gathered up by her friends and disciples; nor has it been possible to notice the writings which she has left behind her to enrich the Church of God, but if these short pages succeed in giving some idea, however slight, of the virtues and heroism of the Saint of Siena, their purpose will have been fulfilled.

St. Catharine was buried in Rome, as befitted her who had given her life for the Church, and her pure and holy body still rests under the High Altar of the Minerva.

In our own times she has been proclaimed Patroness of the Holy City; and God grant that her still being allowed to rest in its centre may be a pledge that He has not forgotten the needs of the Church in the present day, but that in His own good time He will restore Rome to her lawful Master, and that Master to the position so iniquitously wrested from him.

DEVOTION TO THE CHURCH

The seraphic St. Catharine willingly sacrificed the delights of contemplation to labor for the Church and the Apostolic See. How deeply do the troubles of the Church and the consequent loss of souls afflict us? How often do we pray for the Church and the Pope?

Long had the holy Virgin foretold the terrible schism which began ere she died. Day and night she wept and prayed for unity and peace. But the devil excited the Roman people against the Pope, so that some sought the life of Christ's Vicar. With intense earnestness did St. Catharine beg our Lord to prevent this enormous crime. In spirit she saw the whole city full of demons tempting the people to resist and even slay the Pope. The seditious temper was subdued by Catharine's prayers, but the devils vented their malice by scourging the Saint herself, who gladly endured all for God and His Church.

"O Lord, let all the parts of my body, all my bones, all the marrow within my bones, be beaten and pounded together in a mortar; only restore Thy Holy Church to her comeliness and beauty."—St. Catharine.

"Christ loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it."—Ephes. v. 25.

MYSTIC MARRIAGE OF ST. KATHARINE V.

(Lines on a picture by Memling, at Bruges.)

Mystery: Katharine, the bride of Christ.
She kneels: and on her hand the Holy Child
Setteth the ring. Her life is sad and mild,
Laid in God's knowledge—ever unenticed
From Him, and in the end thus fitly priced.
Awe and the music that is near her, wrought
Of angels, hath possesed her eyes in thought;
Her utter joy is hers, and hath sufficed.

There is a pause, while Mary Virgin turns
The leaf and reads. With eyes on the spread book,
That damsel at her knees reads after her.
John whom He loved, and John His harbinger,
Listen and watch. Whereon so e'er thou look,
The light is starred in gems, and the gold burns.

Dante G. Rossetti.

APPARITION
TO
BLESSED MARY MANCINI, W.O.S.D.
PISA, ITALY

1372

"O Virgin! pure and good,
Delay not till I reach my life's last year;
Swifter than shaft and shuttle are, my days
'Mid misery and sin
Have vanished all, and now Death only is behind."
Francesca Petrarch.

BLESSED Mary Mancini, who is best known under the name of Blessed Mary of Pisa, was called Catharine in baptism, and belonged to the noble family of the Mancini. Whilst still in tender years she began to receive many wonderful supernatural favors. When three years old she was warned by her guardian angel that the portico under which her nurse had laid her was in an unsafe condition; and the moment she left it the building fell to the ground. At five and a half she was favored with an ecstasy, in which she found herself transported to a palace in Pisa, in which Peter Gambacorti, one of the chief citizens, was a prisoner. The unhappy nobleman was at that moment undergoing torture, but at the prayer of the innocent child the rope by which he was suspended broke and he was set free. Our Blessed Lady bade the little Catharine daily recite seven Hail Mary on his behalf, telling her that she would one day be supported at his expense.

When twelve years old Catharine's friends compelled her to marry; and before she was sixteen she found herself a widow. Her family insisted on her once more engaging in the married state; but her second husband died when she was twenty-four. Most of her children had passed away in infancy, and

the others did not long survive their father; so that Catharine then found herself able to follow her attraction to prayer and penance with greater freedom than had hitherto been possible. She absolutely refused to yield to the solicitations of her brother, who wanted her to take a third husband; and choosing as her companion a pious servant well advanced in years, she devoted herself to a life of contemplation, austerity, and active works of charity. Every night she took a severe discipline and devoted several hours to prayer, rising for this purpose as soon as she heard the first bell for Matins ring in the church of the Friars Preachers. Early in the morning she went to their church and assisted at all the Masses, and then returned home to spin. Her afternoon was also divided between devotional exercises in the Church and humble labor. She distributed her earnings to the poor and sick, whom she constantly visited, only retaining for herself just sufficient to provide the necessities of life. She received many of the sick poor into her house, nursing them with the utmost tenderness and serving them with her own hands.

One day she found at her door a young man of extraordinary beauty, but very poorly clad and covered with wounds. She brought him into the house and washed and dressed his sores, and before dismissing him, bade him return as often as he stood in need of the same charitable offices. The young man laid his hand on her head and gave her a solemn blessing, adding that he would not fail to visit her again. After his departure, Catharine, going to perform her customary mortification of drinking some of the water with which she had washed his wounds, tasted such ineffable sweetness, that she began to suspect she had been favored by some heavenly visitant. Then her guardian angel told her that, in reward of her charity to His poor, her Divine Spouse had come in the garb of a beggar to receive her services.

In the year 1375, St. Catharine of Siena visited Pisa and a sweet and holy friendship sprang up between her and the holy widow. On Easter Sunday, when they were both praying in the chapel of the Annunciation in the Domincan Church, they

were in the sight of all the people covered by a beautiful and shining cloud, out of which flew a white dove. It was probably at that time the seraphic Saint of Siena persuaded her namesake to enter the Third Order of St. Dominic; though others say that the latter took the step in consequence of a vision in which St. Catharine appeared to her after death, and in which she gave her many practical instructions in the spiritual life.

In the course of time, the holy widow retired into the enclosed Convent of the Holy Cross, apparently of the Second Order, receiving in religion the name of Sister Mary. Some of the relaxed habits of the age seem to have crept into this otherwise edifying community; and only some of its members, including blessed Mary and the young blessed Clara Gambacorti, practised poverty in all its strictness. At the end of eight years the two blessed servants of God, accompanied by five other Sisters, withdrew into the new Convent of St. Dominic, which Peter Gambacorti had built for his daughter; and thus was fulfilled the prophecy which Our Lady had made to blessed Mary long years before, that she should one day be supported at the expense of that nobleman. There they lived in great fervor and strictness of observance. Blessed Mary continued to be favored in religion as she had been in the world, with many supernatural favors and revelations. To obtain the explanation of one of these, she had recourse to Alfonso Vadaterra, Bishop of Jaen and former Confessor to St. Bridgit. He was one of the most distinguished men of his day and an intimate friend of the Gambacorti family; and his reply to Blessed Mary is still preserved. After the death of Blessed Clara, her faithful companion succeeded her in the office of Prioress. She at length happily departed this life on January 22, A.D. 1431, and was beatified by Pius IX.

PRAYER OF SAINT BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX

Remember, Mother, throned in Heaven's splendor,
That never on this earth has it been said
That any heart which sought thy pity tender
Was left uncomforted.

So, wearied of world-friendship's changing fashion,
And bankrupt of world-treasures utterly,
And trusting in thy mercy and compassion,
I come at last to thee.

Why name to thee my needs in my entreating—
Thou, taught in human hearts by the Divine—
Long time agone, when soft His heart was beating,
Fond Mother, close to thine.

O plead with Him who on thy breast was cherished
Sweet Sharer in the world's Redemption Pain!
O let it not be said that I have perished,
Where none came yet in vain.

Katherine E. Conway.

PRAYER TO THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT AND TO THE SACRED HEART

Behold, my most loving Jesus, to what an excess Thy boundless love has carried Thee. Of Thine own Flesh and Precious Blood, Thou hast made ready for me a banquet in order to give me all Thyself. What was it that impelled Thee to this transport of love for me? It was Thy Heart, Thy loving Heart! O adorable Heart of my Jesus! burning furnace of Divine Love! within Thy most sacred wound receive Thou my soul; that in that school of charity I may learn to requite the love of that God Who has given me such wondrous proof of His love. Amen.

100 *days, once a day.*

SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF FOLGOAT
BRITTANY, FRANCE

1380

Of Thee, bright Queen of Heaven, we dare
To beg for aid, when hopes have flown,
Oh! waft Thy fragrance, Lily rare,
O'er hearts that love has made Thine own,
And gently bend to hear our prayer.

Lucille Sullivan.

N the year 1380, there lived near Lesneven, in Bretagne, a good old man named Salaun or Soloman. He had no one to care for him, and as he had some curious ways, and did not associate with any person, the people thought him crazy, and he was commonly known in the village as Solomon the Idiot. He walked with his eyes on the ground, but his heart was in heaven, and the Good God heard all that he did not say with his lips. Too little in mind to be a shepherd, he was loved by God.

Yet old and crippled as he was, he might be seen every evening at sunset hobbling towards the chapel of the Blessed Virgin near the seashore, where the pious peasants were wont to gather, and sing hymns in honor of Our Lady. He would remain behind after the others had gone home, and only when the whole village was wrapt in sleep would he arise and seek his miserable cabin. He would be up next morning even before the busy fisherman had trimmed his craft, or the industrious farmer was in the field.

Sometimes he fasted many days at a time, living on prayer alone; when he found himself very faint and almost exhausted with hunger, he would knock at the door of a cottage, and say humbly, in a low voice: "Salaun would like to eat some

bread." In all his life he never said anything but that—except, "Ave Maria." Barefooted, covered with rags, he went on his way; some laughed, some jeered, and some drew back with a sort of awe; and the wicked little boys cried after him: "Fou du bois! Fou du bois!" from which comes the name of the Chapel—Folgoat. He was of the woods; here, where the Blessed Virgin's Chapel is built he slept under an oak, near a beautiful fountain. The oak stood where the altar is now. The sick who have been healed by its waters know well where the fountain is.

When winter came, and the work in the fields was done, the people did not fail to continue their custom of going every evening to the chapel. And as surely as it began to grow dark, so surely would old Solomon be found there,—though the snow might lie knee-deep and the wind blow ever so hard. One evening, however, the good people missed his familiar face. They sang their hymns as usual, and then prepared to leave the chapel. But they had not gone far, when, to their great astonishment, they saw the old man lying in the snow near the sea-shore. His unkempt hair and matted beard were heavy with icicles. He rolled his glassy eyes, softly muttered, "Ave Maria!" and died. They buried him in an out-of-the-way field, for they thought an idiot ought not to be laid in consecrated ground; and there was no one to mark the spot with a cross or a stone.

When gentle spring followed winter, and the hawthorn blossomed, and the lark sang its tuneful note, a person happened to pass near the place where Solomon was buried. Great was his wonderment to see a snow-white lily rising from the outcast's grave. Going nearer, his surprise was increased to see on the petals of the lily in letters of gold the words, "Ave Maria!"

A crowd soon gathered around, but no one could explain the strange occurrence: no one had planted the lily there, nor could any one account for the wondrous words. At length, the Bishop, hearing of the event, came in state to Lesneven. It was a lovely morning; all the people of the village and the

neighboring towns had assembled, and after Solemn High Mass the multitude formed in procession, and, headed by two acolytes and a cross-bearer, walked to the grave where the body of Solomon the Idiot was buried. The lily was still there. After prayers had been recited, the Bishop ordered the grave to be opened. The astonishment of the beholders knew no bounds when it was discovered that the root of the lily was the old man's heart.

Not many years afterwards the name of Solomon the Idiot was added to the roll of the patrons of Bretagne, and in all their trials and afflictions the good people never failed to invoke the aid of "Holy Solomon."

A church was erected by the owner of the land over the spot where the pious imbecile was buried. It is one of the most beautiful and famous in all Brittany, and when seen in the morning sunlight looks like a lace-work of stone, a veritable dream of the Orient.

Though we must distrust to a certain degree the accounts given by Breton enthusiasm—since the sixty sanctuaries dedicated to the Blessed Virgin in the Léonais country are not all beautiful or grand,—still in this church there is a nameless something at once humble and magnificent,—an exquisite delicacy,—a grave, sweet poetry, simple and sublime, like the plain chant of our hymns.

At the entrance one finds himself before the stone of Kersanton, on which may be deciphered, although with difficulty, the well-nigh obliterated inscription of Duke John, the conqueror of Charles de Blois in that famous war of succession in which Brittany fell into the hands of the English.

On entering the sacred edifice the visitor, in spite of the majesty of the exterior, will not be prepared for the bewildering wealth of wonders which are heaped up in this tomb of the poor "idiot," whose suffering soul while on earth testified by many miracles to the favor which he enjoyed with the Most High. He was gentle, this mendicant,—gentle as a little child, and "meek and humble of heart."

With what beauty, with what grandeur these stories of

Catholic sanctity are embalmed! And what a superhuman teaching is found in this fact, reproduced under a thousand different forms on every page of the annals of Brittany—the monarch humbly kneeling at the tomb of a mendicant, the sovereign bowing his perishable sceptre before this immortal relic —the staff which supported the tottering steps of "the Idiot of the Woods!"

The church of Our Lady of Folgoat, more than any of the sanctuaries of Brittany, renders homage to heavenly poverty. Around the fountain where the saintly mendicant moistened his piece of dry bread, under the branches of the oak where he slept, a reigning prince reared this granite forest, and age after age has brought its wealth to adorn this ducal foundation, which, like a flower, has expanded more and more in each succeeding century.

The Mount of Salvation may be seen from afar (*La Montagne du Salut*), so named, says an old Breton chronicler, "because from these holy heights the Queen of Heaven guards and saves the good people of Brittany." On this mount is perched the Cathedral of the Solitudes, where the faithful of the whole world come to pray to the Immaculate Queen of Heaven, invoking the while the intercession of a beggar, to whom God had not vouchsafed the light of reason, and who, during his life of poverty and suffering, could utter no other prayer save the two words, "Ave Maria."

As one stands in the dark wing of the choir, where the sunlight has not penetrated to caress the marvel in stone which crowns the gallery, they will notice that here in this land of fruits, the stone-cutters had lavished the vine everywhere, as the principal *motif* of the ornaments. The vine is a symbol of the Eucharist, and typifies love and sacrifice. The unknown architects of the Ages of Faith, who built so many masterpieces, knew well that we can never have the love of Jesus brought too frequently to our minds; and their eloquent poems in stone repeat in a thousand different ways the chant of our joy, the acclamation of our tenderness: *Adoremus in æternum Sanctissimum Sacramentum!*

Near the great tower of the church there is a smaller one, built by the Duchess Anne, who, if we may credit the old chronicles, sold Brittany to France, that she might be truly Queen.

Of this famous Church and Shrine Chateaubriand writes: "The dawning day illuminates their twin towers. Now they appear to be crowned with a capital of clouds, magnified in the vapory atmosphere. The birds take them for forest-trees; little black crows fly around their summits and perch in their galleries. But suddenly confused sounds are heard in these sacred heights, frightening away the little birds which had taken refuge there. The Christian architect, not content with building these forests of granite, wished also to preserve the murmurs of the woods, and, by the organ and the swaying bronze, he has reproduced in the Gothic cathedral the echoes of the winds and the reverberation of the thunder in the forests. The ages evoked make their solemn voices heard; the sanctuary trembles, while these enormous bells are startling the echoes over our heads, announcing during all time the Incarnation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

AVE, MARIA

A Breton Legend

In the Ages of Faith, before the day
When men were too proud to weep, or pray,
There stood in a red-roofed Breton town,
Snugly nestled 'twixt sea and down,
A chapel for simple souls to meet
Nightly, and sing with voices sweet,
Ave, Maria.

There was an Idiot, palsied, bleared,
With unkempt locks and a matted beard,
Hunched from the cradle, vacant eyed,
And whose head kept rolling from side to side;
Yet who, when the sunset-glow grew dim,
Joined with the rest in the twilight hymn,
Ave, Maria.

But, when they up-got and wended home,
Those up the hill-side, these to the foam,
He hobbled along in the narrowing dusk,
Like a thing that is only hull and husk;
On as he hobbled, chanting still,
Now to himself, now loud and shrill,
Ave, Maria.

When morning smiled on the smiling deep,
And the fisherman woke from dreamless sleep;
And ran up the sail, and trimmed his craft,
While his little ones leaped on the sand and laughed,
The senseless cripple would stand and stare,
Then, suddenly holloa his wonted prayer,
Ave, Maria.

Others might plough and reap and sow,
Delve in the sunshine, spin in snow,
Make sweet love in a shelter sweet,
Or trundle their dead in a winding sheet;
But he, through rapture and pain and wrong,
Kept singing his one monotonous song,
Ave, Maria.

When thunder growled from the ravelled wrack,
And ocean to welkin bellowed back,
And the lightning sprang from its cloudy sheath,
And tore through the forest with jagged teeth;
Then, leaped and laughed o'er the havoc wreaked,
The Idiot clapped with his hands and shrieked,
Ave, Maria.

Children mocked and mimicked his feet,
As he slouched, or slided along, the street;
Maidens shrank as he passed them by,
And mothers with child eschewed his eye;
And half in pity, half scorn, the folk
Christened him, from the words he spoke,
Ave, Maria.

One year, when the harvest feasts were done,
And the mending of tattered nets begun,
And the kittiwake's scream took a weirder key,
From the wailing wind and the moaning sea,
He was found, at morn, on the fresh strewn snow,
Frozen and faint and crooning low,
Ave, Maria.

They stirred up the ashes between the dogs,
And warmed his limbs by the blazing logs,
Chafed his puckered and bloodless skin,
And strove to quiet his chattering chin;
But, ebbing with unreturning tide,
He kept on murmuring, till he died,
Ave, Maria.

Idiot, soulless, brute from birth,
He could not be buried in sacred earth;
So, they laid him afar, apart, alone,
Without a cross, or turf, or stone,
Senseless clay unto senseless clay,
To which none ever came nigh, to say,
Ave, Maria.

When the meads grow saffron, the hawthorn white,
And the lark bore his music out of sight,
And the swallow outraced the racing wave,
Up from the lonely, outcast grave
Sprouted a lily, straight and high,
Such as she bears to whom men cry,
Ave, Maria.

None had planted it; no one knew,
How it had come there, why it grew;
Grew up strong, till its stately stem
Was crowned with a snow-white diadem—
One pure lily, round which, behold,
Was written by God, in veins of gold,
Ave, Maria.

Over the lily they built a Shrine,
Where are mingled the mystic Bread and Wine—
Shrine you may see in the little town
That is snugly nestled 'twixt deep and down;
Through the Breton land it hath wondrous fame,
And it bears the unshriven Idiot's name,
Ave, Maria.

Hunchback, gibbering, blear-eyed, halt,
From forehead to footstep one foul fault,
Crazy, contorted, mindless-born,
The gentle's pity, the cruel's scorn—
Who shall bar you the Gates of Day,
So you have simple faith to say,
Ave, Maria.

Alfred Austin.

SHRINE OF
OUR LADY OF THE THORN
CHALONS, FRANCE

SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF THE THORN
CHALONS, FRANCE
1400

The Catholic who hears that Vesper bell,
  Howe'er employed, must send a prayer to heaven.
In foreign lands I liked the custom well,
  For with the calm and sober thoughts of even
It well accords; and wert thou journeying there,
It would not hurt thee! to join that Vesper prayer.

Robert Southey.

AT the time when Christianity underwent that extraordinary disturbance which, under the title of the Great Western Schism, gave to the Church two heads, and seemed to falsify the promise of unity made by her divine Founder, France was ruled by Charles VI. All her fair provinces experienced the misfortunes of war, but none so deeply as Champagne. On all sides were combats, incendiarism, and famine; her fields lay fallow, and the victims that escaped war and famine were destroyed by epidemics. As St. Augustine has said, "New wounds broke out ere the old were healed."

It was in the midst of such dire calamities that God granted His people a distant glimpse of their deliverance. On the 24th of March, 1400, the eve of the Annunciation, some shepherds, who were tending their flocks on a hillside about two leagues from Châlons, perceived a bright light issuing from a rustic oratory dedicated to St. John the Baptist. On approaching it, they saw a luminous bush, whose branches, leaves, and thorns burned without being consumed; and in the midst of the flames stood a statue of the Blessed Virgin. Illusion was impossible: the miracle continued all that night and the next day.

The news of the wonderful occurrence quickly spread, and

people hastened to the spot from every direction. Charles of Poitiers, who was then Bishop of Châlons, came, at the head of his chapter and clergy, to view the burning bush. As if the misfortunes of the French people were similar to those of the Hebrews under Pharaoh, here might be seen exactly the same prodigy which Moses witnessed at the foot of Mount Horeb. It was of a character even more touching than that former miracle; for here, in the midst of the flames, shone the image of the Mother of the Redeemer. The Bishop of Châlons, with evidences of the most ardent faith, carried the image with his own hands and deposited it in the Oratory of St. John. And it was this identical statue which was solemnly crowned by order of the Pope only a few months ago.

The devotion of the people soon found expression in the construction of a magnificent church, erected on the spot where the miracle occurred, and destined to receive, on its completion, the miraculous statue. In twenty-four years the principal parts of the structure were finished. The new edifice did not resemble in architectural design the Byzantine style, which imitates the dome of heaven, and of which St. Sophia's of Constantinople and St. Mark's of Venice are examples. Nor did it suggest the style preferred by the ancient Romans—the semicircular arch, which recalls, in its austerity and its subdued light, the catacombs of Rome. It was rather of Gothic design, which has been inspired by Nature herself; its nave and columns are the boles of venerable trees, whose branches, stretching ever upward, meet to form those inflexed arches whence the style derives its name.

On viewing the Church of the Thorn, the majority of the delighted people would fain believe that their prayers took wings to waft them to heaven. Its vault, like the inverted keel of a ship, served only to remind them still more of a Christian's hope of immortal joys. The grandeur of God, and the duties of adoration and obedience which we owe Him, penetrated their souls when they beheld the altar where the presence of the Eucharist was indicated by majesty of outline and richness of decoration. At various intervals were beautiful stained-glass

windows, depicting sacred scenes from the Old and the New Testament—the Bible of the people.

The rustics, who were less familiar with art than their neighbors of the town, were so charmed with the beauty of the work and the rapidity of its construction, that they adopted a charming legend, to the effect that the work of building had never been interrupted by night or by day; for when, at the approach of evening, the laborers quitted their workshops and went to rest, angels took their places and worked until the first faint rays of the sun appeared in the eastern sky.

Such is the church where the miraculous statue of the Blessed Virgin was deposited, and where it received the homage of all generations until the French Revolution. If, during that troublous epoch, the revolutionists destroyed in one hour that which was the result of centuries of labor, it is but due to them to say that they had the grace to spare the Church of the Thorn. On December 6, 1793, however, the venerable statue was put in a place of greater security by M. Bertin, the curé of the parish. Seven years later he himself brought it from its hiding-place and replaced it on the altar.

Only Heaven could have inspired the faith and piety which led people, sovereigns, and clergy in such numbers to the feet of Our Lady of the Thorn. That there has been a popular stream of confidence, the very stones of the church suffice to prove,—the fact that this imposing pile should have been raised so far from any city. That crowds of pious pilgrims have visited the spot is also attested by the numerous miracles which have been worked at l'Epine. Among others we may mention the resuscitation of a still-born infant, brought from Cernon-sur-Coole, which took place on the 15th of August, 1641; the cure of a paralytic (May 9, 1642), who was carried from St. Julien de Courtisols: she left her crutches in the church as an *ex-voto* offering; the cure of a blind man of Mairy-sur-Marne (August 15, 1661), who recovered his sight at the feet of Our Lady of the Thorn; also, in September, 1788, the restoration to life of a child from Vanault-le-Châtel, who had died without baptism.

Our own century has had a share in the miracles of l'Epine. In 1852 a young man afflicted with leprosy—a disease with which science has combated in vain—left Verdun and came to implore relief at this sanctuary. He was suddenly cured of his horrible malady; and sixteen years later he attested that he had never felt the slightest symptoms of its return. On the 12th of May, 1873, another cure—that of a young girl—which was pronounced supernatural by the deposition of the attending physician, gave evidence that Providence still continues to show forth Its mercies at this favored Shrine.

One cannot judge of the wealth of its votaries, nor of the abundance of the graces they received, from the archives of the church; for the Huguenots, and later the malefactors of '93, completely sacked the sacred edifice. But the missing documents have an equivalent in the universal traditions of the province.

Of all the surviving forms of devotion to Our Lady of the Thorn, the most touching is that of the presentation of little children on many principal feasts of Mary. At sight of them, clothed in white and pressing eagerly about her venerated image, the heart of a Christian must be filled with holy joy. But it must ache, also, at the thought of so many others, in less favored lands, who grow up without having learned either to know, to love, or to honor Our Blessed Lady.

After the people, we must recall the princes and sovereigns of France who have visited this Shrine: Charles VI., who favored the construction of the church and the immunity of its receipts; Charles VII., who twice visited the sanctuary; Margaret of Scotland, the Dauphiness, who made the pilgrimage from Châlons to l'Epine on foot; Louis XI., who came thither to fulfil the vow he had made in the prison of Péronne;* the Duchess of Orleans, Princess Palatine, in the seventeenth century; Queen Marie Leczinska, in the eighteenth; Napoleon, in 1812; Charles X., in 1828; and finally Louis Philippe, in 1831.

*In 1471 he gave 200 crowns to the church of l'Epine. The year following he published an edict commanding the striking of the clock at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of each day, whence comes the custom of reciting the Angelus.

In speaking of the august pilgrims of l'Epine we must mention the name of Joan of Arc; for we shall see that history follows the footsteps of that heaven-sent liberator from the moment when she touched the soil of Châlons. L'Epine!—the name must have suggested to her pleasant memories of her childhood. She had passed many happy days in its vicinity; for she had resided for some time with a maternal uncle at Sermaize which is only a few leagues from l'Epine. It was about the time when the miracle of the burning bush had attained its greatest publicity; when people came thither from long distances, filled with enthusiastic faith. There is little doubt that Joan was among the number. In 1429 she was again at Châlons, only a short distance from the spot which had thrilled her youthful heart; but under what different circumstances! She was on her way to raise the siege of Orleans, to take part in the consecration of the King at Rheims.

This beautiful sanctuary of Our Lady of the Thorn has not been ignored by the Holy See, and several Popes have encouraged its frequentation by signal favors, particularly Calixtus III., Pius II., and Gregory XV. Leo XIII., having heard the origin and the history of the devotion, and an account of the benefits derived from the pilgrimages, said with emotion, when the solemn coronation of the venerable statue was proposed: "Yes, Our Lady of the Thorn shall be crowned, and in my name. Prepare for her a diadem worthy of the Mother of God, of the people whom she protects, and of French art."

THE "ANGELUS" BELL

Against the sunset glow they stand
Two humblest toilers of the land,
Rugged of speech and rough of hand,
  Bowed down by tillage;
No grace of garb or circumstance
Invests them with a high romance,
Ten thousand such through fruitful France,
  In field and village.

The day's slow path from dawn to west
Has left them, soil-bestained, distrest,
No thought beyond the nightly rest—
  New toil to-morrow;
Till solemnly the "Ave" bell
Rings out the sun's departing knell,
Borne by the breezes' rhythmic swell
  O'er swath and furrow.

O lowly pair! You dream it not,
Yet on your hard unlovely lot
That evening gleam of life has shot
  A glorious presage;
For prophets oft have yearned, and kings
Have yearned in vain to know the things
Which to your simple spirit brings
  That curfew message.

Turn to the written page, and read
In other strain the peasant's creed,
With satyr love and vampire greed
  How hearts are tainted.
Read to the end unmoved who can,
Read how the primal curse on man
May shape a fouler Caliban
  Than poet painted.

And this is Nature! Be it so:
It needs a master's hand to show
How through the man the brute may grow
  By Hell's own leaven;
We blame you not; enough for us
Those two lone figures bending thus,
For whom that far-off Angelus
  Speaks Hope and Heaven.

R. M. Milnes (Lord Houghton).

THE ANGELUS BELL

"He heard the Angelus from convent towers."

It is a custom of the Roman Catholic Church to repeat morning, noon and evening a prayer to the Virgin called Angelus Domini. It is also the custom that a bell should be rung at

morning, noon and sunset, as a call to recite the Angelus, or to give notice of the hour when it is recited. It is a very beautiful custom, and as the notes of the Angelus bell peal out among the peasantry of Europe, the workers stop and silently bow their heads, until the prayer is over. It is a habit which well might be copied throughout the whole length and breadth of the land.

Jean Francois Millet, a farm laborer who painted his own people, was so inspired that he painted "The Angelus," a magnificent picture exhibited all over the world, and finally bought at auction in England several years ago by the American Art Association for $116,000. Subsequently the picture was bought from the American Art Association for $150,000 by Monsieur Chauchard, a merchant of Paris.

The picture represents two peasants, a man and a woman, standing in the field with humbly bowed heads, while in the distance a slender church spire pierces the pink sky, from which the holy notes of the Angelus are pealing. The picture is very beautiful; quiet, strong, soothing, filled with the peaceful serenity which comes with homage to the Divine Power.

THE ANGELUS DOMINI AND REGINA CŒLI

ANGELUS DOMINI

V. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary,
R. And she conceived of the Holy Ghost.
Hail, Mary, etc.
V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord,
R. May it be done unto me according to Thy word.
Hail, Mary, etc.
V. And the Word was made Flesh:
R. And dwelt amongst us.
Hail, Mary, etc.
V. Pray for us, holy Mother of God:
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made known by the message of an angel, may, by His Passion and Cross, be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

REGINA CŒLI

O Queen of Heaven, rejoice; Alleluia.
For He whom thou didst merit to bear; Alleluia.
Hath risen, as He said; Alleluia.
Pray for us to God; Alleluia.

V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary; Alleluia.
R. For the Lord hath risen indeed. Alleluia.

LET US PRAY

O God, Who didst vouchsafe to give joy to the world. through the resurrection of Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ; grant, we beseech Thee, that through His Mother, the Virgin Mary, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

100 days, each time to all who at the sound of the bell, morning, noon, and evening at sunset, shall say the Angelus *on their knees. Plenary once a month. It is said standing on Saturday evening and Sunday. In Paschal-tide the* Regina Cœli *is said instead, standing. Those who do not know the* Regina Cœli, *may say the* Angelus.

TO OUR MOTHER

"Pray for us—now at the hour of our death."

Mother, the skies are dim,
The air is cold,
And forms of terror grim
The mists unfold.

Weary am I and weak,
And sore afraid;
O Virgin pure and meek,
Sweet Mother, aid!

If, I could see thy face,
'Twere almost Heaven;
A sign of pitying grace,
And sin forgiven.

But oh, this awful gloom,
Within, without!
The fiends of wrath and doom
Despair and doubt!

Oh, for one bright hour more
Of strength supreme,
Like those I wasted o'er
My life's long dream!

But, Mother, if thou plead
With thy dear Son,
In this, my woeful need,
My Heaven is won.

Katherine E. Conway.

MY BEADS.

Sweet blessed beads! I would not part
With one of you for richest gem
That gleams in kingly diadem;
Ye know the mystery of my heart.

For I have told you every grief
In all the days of twenty years,
And I have moistened you with tears,
And in your decades found relief.

Ah! time has fled, and friends have failed,
And joys have died; but in my needs
Ye were my friends, my blessed beads!
And ye consoled me when I wailed.

For many and many a time, in grief,
My weary fingers wandered round
Thy circled chain, and always found
In some Hail Mary sweet relief.

How many a story you might tell
Of inner life, to all unknown;
I trusted you and you alone,
But ah! you keep my secrets well.

Ye are the only chain I wear—
A sign that I am but the slave,
In life, in death, beyond the grave,
Of Jesus and His Mother fair.

Rev. A. J. Ryan.

Selected from Father Ryan's Poems. Copyright, P. J. Kenedy & Sons.

SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF THE FORSAKEN
VALENCIA, SPAIN

1414

O Maiden Mother! Light's new dawning
Bright Star of Morn! first flower of Spring!
Around whose neck the Baby Jesus
So lovingly was wont to cling!
O thou, whom by a thousand titles
Already grace thy suppliant sons,
Be pleas'd to be what infants lisp thee,
Madonna of the little ones.

Rev. T. Harper, S.J.

N the native place of the famous Cid, the warrior, the noble city of Valencia, is venerated the beautiful miraculous image of Our Lady of Los Desamparados. In that city, embalmed by the fragrance of aromatic gardens rising majestically above the Mediterranean, there are also many temples, including the Cathedral, dedicated to the Mother of God.

The devotion of the Valencians to the Queen of Heaven is as remarkable and edifying as that witnessed in the provinces of Andalusia; Nuestra Senora de los Desamparados (Our Lady of the Forsaken) is invoked by the people in all their difficulties and afflictions. Amongst the churches dedicated to the Blessed Virgin is one under the title of Los Desamparados, to which there is a brotherhood attached, established four hundred years ago, whose origin and aim are worthy the admiration of all who have a heart capable of appreciating works of genuine charity.

In the year 1380, ten pious men of Valencia resolved to devote their lives and fortunes to the laudable object of rescuing and providing for children abandoned by their unnatural parents. After mature deliberation and prayer, they organized a religious community to which they gave the name of "Monte

de Piedad." They then rented a house, collected the orphans, and begged alms from door to door for them. Their charity went still further—for they received also aged and infirm people and pilgrims.

These heroic acts of charity soon reached the ears of Don Martin, King of Aragon, who, highly approving the zeal and charity of the members, declared himself their protector. After their community had been in existence twenty years, they placed themselves and their pious labors in a special manner under the protection of the Mother of God. They knew that this heavenly Mother is the Queen of Charity, and exercises it not only towards mortals in general, but especially towards those who know how to unite the love of God with that of their neighbor.

After much prayer and deliberation, they resolved to call their community "The Brotherhood of Innocent Children and of the Mother of the Forsaken." They next wished to have a statue of Mary for their new establishment lately erected by the munificence of the King of Spain. They consulted Father Juan Gilaberto, to whose zealous preaching was due, next to God, their vocation and united action. He undertook to have one executed by an excellent artist, but God, in whose eyes works of charity and mercy are so acceptable, resolved to reward them in a miraculous manner.

It was in the year 1414, that three pilgrim youths arrived at the door of their monastery, soliciting lodging for the night. They were hospitably received by the superior, who, in the course of the evening spoke to them about the wished-for statue. They told him they were sculptors by profession and, in reward for his hospitality, and for the honor and glory of Mary, the Mother of God, they would carve him such a statue as was never before seen in all Spain. They asked to be furnished with a block of marble, tools, and provisions for three days, and to be left undisturbed during that time. They locked themselves up in a large room; and, to the no small amazement of the good Abbot and his brethren, not a sound of hammer or chisel was ever heard during the three days.

The fourth day arrived without bringing any tidings of the

three young men or the statue. The monks knocked repeatedly at the door without receiving any answer. At that time there was living in the city a blind and paralyzed woman, who, by her patience and resignation to the will of God through all her sufferings, had arrived at a very high degree of sanctity. This holy woman, hearing of the circumstance, consulted God in prayer in order to know what was to be done. She then told the monks to force in the door and they would find their statue, but not the young men, for they were heavenly visitants.

The good priest, Father Gilberto, opened the door, and lo! to the astonishment of all, found no sculptors, but a lovely statue of Our Blessed Lady, such as was never seen in Spain before or since; and at the same moment the holy woman was entirely cured of her paralysis and blindness. All were unanimous in the opinion that they were angels, since neither the tools nor victuals were touched by them, and the block of marble remained as when purchased. The happy news of the beautiful statue and its miraculous origin spread rapidly over the city. The inhabitants flocked to its feet to thank God and His Holy Mother for this new proof of their love. It was called Nuestra Senora de los Desamparados (Our Lady of the Forsaken). It is four feet high, the head a little inclined, the left arm, as usual, holding the Infant Jesus, while in the right is held a beautiful bouquet of silver. No person has ever been able to tell of what material the statue is composed.

The great number of jewels adorning this statue are very valuable, and serve to show the tender devotion and gratitude of the people for miraculous favors received. It occupied, and was venerated in the place where the angels formed it during many years, until, in the year 1489, the Bishop and clergy, seeing the wonderful miracles worked there, and the throngs of visitors becoming so great, had it removed to the Cathedral Church.

But Mary, the sweet Help of Christians, was not to be without a splendid temple for her wonder-working statue. The Count of Oropesa, Viceroy of Valencia in the year 1646, saw the city attacked by pestilence, and great numbers carried off

daily, himself also contracting the disease. With a firm and unshaken faith he invoked Our Blessed Lady, and immediately the pestilence ceased. In gratitude to Mary, the people with their Viceroy, resolved to build a noble temple that would be a lasting monument of their devotion towards her.

With the pious Viceroy taking the lead, the citizens commenced the building, the completion of which took fifteen years. As a still further mark of their gratitude, they resolved that Our Lady of the Forsaken should be publicly proclaimed patroness of Valencia. Accordingly, on the 18th day of March, 1697, the Archbishop, with all his clergy, the civil authorities, and all the people, amidst the booming of cannon, sounding of trumpets and loud acclamations of the people, proclaimed her their Protectress, while her miraculous statue was carried in procession.

The church stands in the principal plaza and is rich in architecture. It has three fronts, with arches and columns in the Ionic style. The interior of the sanctuary presents a beautiful appearance; it is oval in form, the arch frescoed, and the walls enriched with precious marbles. The floor is of Geneva marble. The miraculous statue reposes on the main altar, which was built in the present century. This altar has two columns of jasper, and its pillars and mouldings are of the Corinthian order. The table of the altar, as well as four statues of the evangelists, are also of precious marble. At the sides of the high altar stand the statues of St. Vincent, Martyr, and St. Vincent Ferrer—the latter a son and patron of Valencia to whom the people pay great devotion. The sanctuary is separated from the church by a railing of brass. The statue has for its basis a cloud of solid silver.

The statue of Our Lady of the Forsaken is one of the richest in Spain; for it has a crown sparkling all over with the richest of diamonds. The mother of the King, Isabella II., in the year 1859, visited Valencia and made rich presents to the Holy Shrine, putting under Mary's protection her son, Don Alfonso XII., then Prince of the Asturias. The amount of her presents was valued at $50,000. Christina of Bourbon, grandmother of

King Alfonso, also made very rich presents to this sanctuary. There is an account of two most remarkable miracles wrought at this Shrine. The statue, as before remarked, has in its right hand a lily of silver. At one time an innocent man, condemned to death for murder, while passing by this church on his way to execution, was allowed to pray before the statue: when lo! to the astonishment of all, the right hand holding the lily was seen to move several times. The people cried "a miracle! He is innocent! set him free!" The Viceroy being consulted, answered: "How can I condemn him now?" The liberated man repaired to the church to thank his Protectress, vowing to love and honor her and proclaim her praises all his life.

A rich man of Naples, Italy, was condemned to death for a murder he never committed; but Our Lady appeared to him and told him he would be set at liberty. He told his confessor of it, describing her as venerated in Valencia, though he had never seen or heard of her statue there, describing even the number and appearance of the diamonds in her crown. The next day, the real culprit gave himself up, and the innocent man was set at liberty. He made a vow to travel until he found a statue representing her as she appeared to him in his vision. After sixteen months' travel, he arrived in Valencia, and going to the beautiful church of Our Lady, exclaimed: "I have found what I have long sought, for there is Mary the Mother of Jesus, my Saviour, just as she appeared to me." He remained long in that holy sanctuary, returning thanks to his blessed Mother, and then returned to his own country, full of gratitude and devotion.

A LEGEND OF THE PYRENEES

Deep in the Pyrenees dwelt Pierre the drover,
With six small children clamoring for bread
While he had none to give them, and, moreover,
A seventh child was coming to be fed.

Poor Pierre went forth at night and wandered lonely,
He knew not where, with heart so sad and sore,
His thoughts were centred on his young ones only
Whose cries rang in his ears still more and more.

"Halt!" said a threatening voice, "your gold count over,"
(It was the robber chief El Capitan)
"Alas, my lord, I'm but a wretched drover
Flying from hungry mouths as best I can."

He told his story to the lawless ranger,
"Here take this gold and buy your children food,
And when the stork comes with the little stranger,
I'll stand as gossip while I'm in the mood."

The outlaw kept his word, thus lightly given;
A boy was born, but after three short years
He died, and his young soul took flight to heaven,
And at the gate he stood with ravished ears.

"Enter, my child," said Peter, "swell the chorus
That surges round the Throne of the Most High,"
"I cannot," said the child, "Apostle glorious,
Except you also let my godsire by."

"And who is he?" "A robber of the mountain."
"My son, a robber cannot enter here,"
At which the boy sat down, and like a fountain
Dropped from his eye tear after bitter tear.

But then approached a lady robed in splendor,
Celestial brightness shone around her head,
To him she said in accents soft and tender
"My child, why weepest thou? Come in, nor dread."

It was our Mother Mary, Queen of Glory,
Who spoke thus sweetly to the drover's child,
Who, gathering courage, told his simple story,
Which, having ended, Mary, Mother, smiled.

"Take to thy godfather this cup—a measure
From which my Son drank vinegar and gall
When sore athirst, and, when 'tis filled with treasure,
The gates of Heaven will open at his call."

El Capitan outside his cave lay sleeping,
A pistol and a dagger in his hands;
But, when the shades of eve around were creeping,
He wakes, and starts, for lo! beside him stands

A cherub with a lovely face and holy,
And wings of silver. "Spirit, who art thou
Who comest from high Heaven to me so lowly,
A man of crime—'tis written on my brow."

"My godfather, the Blessed Virgin Mary
Sends thee this cup to fill it with thy tears.
For thy salvation's sake, then, be not chary
Of them, and weep away the sins of years."

Years fled. St. Peter stood at Heaven's portals,
And saw approach two figures robed in white;
And well the Guardian knew that they were mortals,
Redeemed and saved, who came to claim their right.

One was a cherub, with the stamp of Heaven
Set on his face; the other, meek and mild,
Seemed as a sinner who had been forgiven
Through penitence. Thus spoke the angel child:

"Behold this cup; 'tis filled to overflowing
With tears of anguish for the misspent years."
"Enter," Saint Peter said, with face all glowing,
"There is no passport like repentant tears."

J. C. H.

PRAYER TO ST. PHILOMENA—VIRGIN AND MARTYR

O glorious St. Philomena! who animated by a burning love for Jesus, our Saviour, didst shine in Holy Church by the splendor of perfect virginity and the practice of the most heroic virtues, obtain for us of thy Divine Spouse the grace to keep ever unsullied the precious treasure of chastity, and to practice with generosity the virtues of our state, that having, after thy example, walked in His footsteps during our life on earth, we may with thee rejoice in His glory, through all eternity. Amen.

APPARITION TO
ST. BERNARDINE OF SIENA, O.S.F.
SIENA, ITALY

APPARITION
TO
ST. BERNARDINE OF SIENA, O.S.F.
SIENA, ITALY
1417

Jesu, Word of God Most highest,
Who to suppliants nought deniest,
Who free grace to souls suppliest
Those who stand thy Mother nighest
Thou preserve and make like Thee.
Adam of St. Victor.

MANY years ago the devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus struck deep roots in the hearts of the faithful. Nowadays it is one of the most popular of Catholic devotions; and its popularity is due in great measure, if not altogether, to the burning zeal and eloquence of Saint Bernardine of Siena, a son of Saint Francis, and one of the most prominent missionaries of the fifteenth century. No doubt, this devotion, like all solid devotions, can boast a still more remote antiquity: was it not in the Name of Jesus that Peter bade the man "who was lame from his mother's womb" and "who lay at the gate of the temple," arise and walk? When the Apostles preached, or baptized, or wrought miracles, they did all this in the Name of Jesus: around that Holy Name crowded a throng of memories linked to the personality of Him who bade them go forth and preach to all nations the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. A little later, one of the earliest Christian poets connects every title of the Incarnate God with the Name of Jesus. Later still, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, whose *Jesus dulcis memoria* breathes such refreshing piety, made the precincts of the cloister ring with the praises of the Holy Name.

It was left, however, to Saint Bernardine of Siena, in the

opening half of the fifteenth century, to be the apostle, the popular exponent, of this genuine Catholic devotion: it was he who brought it home to the hearts of the people. Through his powerful influence the name of Jesus became the rallying cry of the soldiers of the Cross, the holy standard under which they fought and conquered the enemies of Christ's Kingdom, and their own salvation.

It was on the 8th of September, in the year 1380, a few months after the decease of that faithful spouse of Christ, Saint Catherine of Siena, that Bernardino—or Bernardine, as we call him—Albizeschi was born. Tollo, his father, belonged to the ancient and noble family of the Albizeschi. Before his marriage, his prudence, humanity, and uprightness had won for him the affection and esteem of the Sienese, and the latter showed their appreciation of his sterling qualities of mind and heart by appointing him, in the year 1377, to the governorship of Massa, a little town dependent on the commune of Siena, and about thirty miles distant from that city. It was in this town of Massa that Bernardine was born. Nera, the Saint's mother, was the daughter of Bindus Raynorius, and through the influence of her father she became the wife of Tollo Albizeschi. She died in the year 1383, at the early age of twenty-two, and three years later Tollo followed her into eternity. Bernardine was thus left an orphan when he had barely reached his seventh year.

Diana, the Saint's maternal aunt, took charge of her sister's child, and, during the five years he remained under her fostering care and tuition, instilled into his heart a spirit of fervor and piety, for which she herself was remarkable. Even at this tender age Bernardine was conspicuous for his love of Our Blessed Lady, his love of holy purity, and his assiduous attendance at church; he listened with particular delight to the sermons, and on his return home would in his own boyish fashion repeat whatever fragments he remembered, and imitate, whilst delivering them, the gestures and attitude of the preachers.

When Bernardine had reached his eleventh year, two of his

father's brothers, Christopher and Angelo, recalled him to Siena to begin his education. He was thus brought under the influence of John of Spoleto, a master celebrated at that time for learning and piety.

The old chroniclers have left us but scanty details of this period of Bernardine's life; but from expressions scattered here and there in these ancient documents, we gather that Bernardine proved himself a willing and docile scholar. He was beloved by everybody who came in contact with him. His cheerful and open countenance, his bright eyes, sparkling with intelligence, attracted the attention of everyone; whilst his aptitude for knowledge and manly disposition of character earned for him golden opinions from his master. He was kind and considerate, and though affable and yielding, he could, if need were, assume in the presence of his companions an unbending and dignified attitude. He hated vulgarity in any shape or form, and his schoolfellows were well aware of it; sometimes they would forget themselves so far as to indulge in coarseness and levity, but at the approach of Bernardine all this would suddenly cease. All these natural qualities of mind and heart were enhanced a hundred-fold by grace: for virtue took a strong hold of this generous and noble soul. Holy purity shed its lustre around his youth, and marked him with its own indelible stamp. He could not bear the slightest impropriety; his features colored with shame if he happened to hear an immodest word. One day, as he was playing with his companions on the piazza, a man ventured to use some improper language: quick as lightning, Bernardine struck at him with all his might, and hit the offender just below the chin. In after years Bernardine was preaching on this same piazza, when a man was observed to be listening intently to the words of the preacher, and sobbing bitterly; this was the man whom Bernardine had as a boy so unequivocally rebuked for his intemperate and loose language.

From his infancy Bernardine showed a tender devotion for Mary, the Immaculate Mother of God. He loved her with all the enthusiasm and devotion of his noble and chivalrous

heart. She was the depositary of all his thoughts, the guardian of all his affections; her name was ever on his lips; to please her was his sole delight. The incident we are about to relate will serve to illustrate his love for the Queen of Angels, as well as to give us another trait of his character.

After the death of Diana, his maternal aunt, his cousin Tobia watched over him. One day Bernardine informed his cousin that he was in love. This information alarmed the good lady, who trembled at the thought that her cousin might endanger his innocence at an age when youth feels for the first time the warning thrills of awakening passions. Bernardine noticed no doubt the anxiety that preyed upon his cousin's mind; so the next day he volunteered some further information. He was, he said, not only in love; but the thought of her whom he loved never left him night or day; moreover, he continued, he went to see her twice a day just outside the Camollia gate, on the way leading to Florence. This went on for a few days; the lad had some revelation to make each day about her whom he called his sweetheart, without ever saying who she might be, or where precisely she dwelt. Tobia, whose anxious curiosity grew apace with every fresh revelation, could bear it no longer; she determined to follow her cousin, and watch his movements. The next day therefore that Bernardine went in the direction of the Camollia gate, she hastened after him, and from a coign of vantage, where she could see without being seen, was agreeably surprised to discover her cousin kneeling before a statue of the Madonna—his hands joined in fervent prayer, and his eyes fixed on the image of his Queen; shortly afterwards he arose, and returned home beaming with joy and gladness. Tobia had thus discovered the secret of Bernardine's love; so the next day, when her unsuspecting cousin came to tell her in his own playful way about the lady of his thoughts, she smiled, but held her peace.

His zeal was so pleasing to Our Blessed Lady, that she procured for him the grace of his religious vocation, and, after having favored him with many benedictions, she even deigned to appear to him one day, and address him thus: "Your devo-

tion pleases me, and, as a pledge of still greater reward, I give you the gift of preaching, and the power to perform miracles; these are gifts which I have obtained for you from my Divine Son; and I add to them the promise that you shall share eternally in the happiness I enjoy in Heaven."

Meanwhile Bernardine had made rapid strides in the way of knowledge, and had gradually made himself proficient in philosophy, civil and canon law, but above all in the study of Holy Scripture. The Word of God caused him intense satisfaction. He delighted to probe into and discover the hidden manna which the inspired writings contain, and he thus, perhaps unconsciously, prepared himself for that grand work of the apostolate which was to make his name famous throughout the length and breadth of his native land.

In the year 1400 Pope Boniface the Ninth promulgated a jubilee indulgence. Bernardine had just attained his twentieth year, and had already made rapid progress in the science of the Saints. An opportunity was now afforded him of showing of what stuff Saints are made. Thousands of pilgrims passed through Siena that year on their way to Rome. Unfortunately the plague broke out among them, and so terrible were its ravages that the accommodation at the hospital Santa Maria della Scala was taxed to its utmost extent. A number of priests, twenty-two members of the Confraternity della Scala, besides eighteen ladies who had nobly offered their services to tend the sick, were struck down and died victims to their charity. In these circumstances few were willing to face the pestilential atmosphere of the hospital.

At the call of Christian charity the generous-hearted Bernardine never hesitated. Turning his back on the brilliant career that was opened to him in the world, he came forward and offered his services to the hospital. His noble example influenced twelve other young men, who all betook themselves to the bedsides of their suffering brethren, and remained at this post of honor as long as the terrible calamity lasted. The scourge raged for four months, and during that short period claimed two thousand victims.

When Bernardine's services could be dispensed with, he returned home—his constitution shattered by the incessant toil and hardships he had so nobly borne. For several weeks he lay in a precarious condition, and after a slow recovery he rose from his bed of sickness a changed man. During those weary hours of pain and suffering, he had heard in the inmost recesses of his soul the gentle whisper of God's voice, and, obedient to the call of the Holy Spirit, he resolved to retire from the world, and devote himself entirely to the service of his Divine Master. For two years he withdrew from the busy turmoil of life and its surroundings, and, after mature deliberation, sought admission into the Order of Saint Francis in the year 1403. He received the holy habit on the 8th of September, and twelve months later made his profession. Another year elapsed whilst he prepared himself for Holy Orders, and on the 8th of September, 1404, he sang his first Mass and preached his first sermon on Our Blessed Lady in a little chapel not far distant from Columbaria, where he spent the first years of his religious life.

As a religious, Bernardine strove to acquire those virtues which shone so conspicuously in the Blessed Francis. The poverty, humility, disinterestedness, and charity of the Seraphic Patriarch seemed to live once more in his ardent and enthusiastic disciple. Bidding adieu with a light heart to all the world holds dear, he sold his extensive patrimony, and distributed the proceeds in alms to the poor; he thus embraced that lifelong martyrdom his soul yearned after—the martyrdom of poverty. So profound was his humility that he shrank from the dignity of the priesthood, and it was only at the earnest entreaty of his superiors, and in obedience to their will, that he consented at all to be ordained. Later on in the same spirit he refused successively the bishoprics of Siena, Ferrara, and Urbino, hiding his humility under the playful remark that "he preferred to be bishop of the whole of Italy rather than bishop of one small city."

Bernardine loved all those who came in contact with him, and was beloved by them in return. The annals of the Fran-

ciscan Order testify to the deep spiritual affection that existed between him and " his very dear companion and most faithful disciple," John Capistran. Moreover, he never lost his affection for those who had watched over him in his infancy, and had lavished every care on him when he was left alone in the world at the early age of six. One day he was preaching at Milan, when he suddenly stopped, and left the pulpit—a prey to some strong and visible emotion; his eyes filled with tears, and he seemed heart-broken. The audience thronged around him, and sought the cause of his sorrow. "I have just lost," he replied, sobbing, "her who was the guardian angel of my infancy, and a second mother to me." He referred to his cousin Tobia, whose death God had just revealed to him in a miraculous way.

His charity, like that of his Divine Master, embraced even his enemies. Some of the brethren reported in his hearing some of the violent accusations launched against the Saint by those whom they called his enemies. "Enemies?" replied Bernardine. "I have no enemies! Do not call those my enemies who afford me occasions of greater merit and means of sanctification!"

His religious brethren were not slow to appreciate the sterling qualities of this true son of Saint Francis. In due course they acknowledged the talent and virtue of their brother by appointing him successively Lector of Theology, Guardian, and Novice-Master. The onerous duties entailed by these various offices were rendered more onerous still by the circumstances that surrounded Bernardine during his tenure of them. Though a detailed account of these circumstances would be out of place in a short sketch of the Saint's life, we cannot overlook them altogether, as they will enable the reader to understand the influence St. Bernardine exerted over his brethren—an influence that had for its ultimate goal a wider propagation by the Franciscans of the devotion to the Holy Name.

Bernardine had scarcely received the sacred unction of the Priesthood, when, at the command of his superiors, he went forth to preach the word of God. His first sermon, we are told,

charmed the whole audience, and gave an early promise of the apostolic triumphs that awaited him in his future career. Meanwhile, however, his voice grew so hoarse and weak that it proved a serious impediment to his effective preaching, and some there were who whispered that the young religious would soon have to retire from this field of the Apostolate. Perplexed, but in no way discouraged, the Saint had recourse to Our Blessed Lady, and requested her, if it were the will of God, to obtain for him a complete cure. His prayers were answered; in due course his voice lost all its hoarseness, and henceforth, to use the expression of one of his contemporaries, it "bewitched his hearers" by its harmonious flexibility and power of penetration.

It was not, however, till the year 1418 that Bernardine entered into the foremost rank of the great preachers of the Christian Renaissance. As has been said, he had filled the important positions of Guardian, Lector of Theology, and Novice-Master. This hidden life in the cloister, which duties imposed by Holy Obedience necessarily enforced upon him, did not prevent him from sallying forth now and then to preach the Gospel, and to oppose the growing worldliness and spirit of religious indifference which the votaries of a Pagan Renaissance spread far and wide. Thus we find him at Alexandria in Lombardy about the year 1408, side by side with St. Vincent Ferrer, the great Dominican Apostle of that period. Bernardine went often to listen to the sermons of his saintly brother-in-arms, and these two holy souls communed together on the evils that infested Italy during this epoch. The Franciscan was present one day whilst Vincent was preaching, when the latter suddenly broke off his sermon, and foretold to the astonished audience the future greatness of the humble son of St. Francis: "Know, my brethren," he exclaimed, "that there is amongst you a religious of the Order of St. Francis who, in a few years, will be conspicuous throughout Italy. Though he is now only a a young man, whilst I am already bent with age, nevertheless, believe me, he will be honored in the Church of God before I am. I shall retire to France and Spain, and those Italian

provinces that I have not yet evangelized I shall leave to him." This prediction was realized to the letter. Ten years later, when the fame of Bernardine began to spread, Vincent retired to France, as he had foretold. The latter part of his prophecy was also fulfilled, for Bernardine was canonized and venerated as a Saint by the Church two years before St. Vincent.

Ten years later this prophecy was vividly brought back to Bernardine's memory by the extraordinary behavior of one of the junior religious of the Friary of Fiesole, near Florence, over which the Saint was then presiding. One night this religious, impelled by some irresistible power, ran up and down the cloister, crying aloud: "Brother Bernardine, hide no longer the talents God has given thee! Go and preach to the people of Lombardy!" For two consecutive nights the same incident took place, and Bernardine, who happened to be away at the time, was duly informed on his return of the strange occurrence. Coupling this event with the prophetic words he had heard ten years before from the lips of St. Vincent Ferrer, the holy Guardian had immediate recourse to prayer, and caused others to pray, too, with the result that he became convinced that this was a direct call from God, which it was his duty to obey without delay.

Bernardine's vocation thenceforth was set in a clearer light, and the work God intended him to do assumed a definite character and shape. He resolved to devote himself entirely to the ministry of preaching, and set about immediately fulfilling the task imposed upon him by Almighty God. He was told to go to Lombardy, and to Lombardy he went; for in the year 1418 we find him practising a Lenten course at Milan. A cultured Milanese has left us a graphic account of the impression made upon the inhabitants of the city by the holy missionary's words. Crowds gathered around the pulpit eager to catch every sentence of the preacher. They never tired or grew weary, though we have it on record that Bernardine preached sometimes for four or five hours; the ordinary business of the city was suspended. Attracted and subdued by the doctrine of this new Apostle, men who were at enmity for years forgot their differ-

ences and forgave each other; sinners repented of their vices; worldlings entered into themselves and forsook pleasure; the factions which divided society, and fought against each other, flung aside their shibboleths and battle-cries, and ranged themselves under the banner of Christ with no other device but the holy name of Jesus.

The same triumph awaited Bernardine at Siena, Ferrara, Bologna, Florence, and Venice, and as his fame spread, the whole of Italy, from Lombardy in the north to the Kingdom of Naples in the south, was eager to listen to him. To all he delivered the same message; for all he had the same exhortation to extinguish the spirit of faction and hatred that tore asunder the petty republics of the peninsula, to imbue themselves with the spirit of the Gospel, to gather together under the standard of their King and Master, Jesus Christ.

For Bernardine had in all his sermons but one object in view —the spreading of the knowledge and love of Christ. His own soul, nurtured in the school of poverty and detachment, trained and disciplined by humility, obedience, and self-renunciation, was all aglow with fire of divine charity. Indeed, this passionate affection and tender devotion for his Master contained the whole secret of Bernardine's success as a preacher and missioner. A celebrated preacher of those days was once asked the reason why the sermons of the Franciscan Friar bore so much more fruit than his own: "Brother Bernardine," answered he, in a spirit of genuine humility, "is a furnace of Divine Love, and how can that which is only warm kindle a fire in the souls of others?"

This spirit of charity betrayed itself in every sermon of the Friar, and made a deep and lasting impression on his audience. It inspired him with the loftiest themes for his discourses, and furnished him with that burning eloquence which withdrew his hearers from the world and its vain amusements and pleasures, and threw them at the feet of Jesus Christ. Æneas Piccolomini, who in later years became Pope and assumed the name of Pius II., has recorded his impressions of the preaching of Bernardine, and he tells us that the inexhaustible foun-

tain of the Saint's eloquence, together with his profound and orthodox teaching, attracted the admiration of all, and caused him to be venerated, like another St. Paul, as a vessel of divine election.

Another cause of the Saint's popularity as a preacher can be traced to the fact that he realized early in his career the necessity of going to the people and preaching to them in their own plain and simple language. Two centuries previously the Seraphic Patriarch of Assisi had re-introduced into the world the long-forgotten style of eloquence in which St. Peter spoke to the assembled people outside the Temple. "I admonish and exhort preachers," says St. Francis in his Rule, "that when they preach, their language be well considered and simple, for the benefit and edification of the people, discoursing to them of vices and virtues, punishment and glory." No one understood the spirit of this salutary exhortation better than those great Apostles of Italy—Bernardine, John Capistran, and James of the Marches; and never was there an age in which the primitive kind of Christian eloquence was more needed than that in which these three holy men flourished. The Renaissance movement, as we shall have occasion to mention later on, was playing havoc with the grand ideals of clergy and laity alike. The pulpit itself was not free from the latent poison of Humanism. Sermons were interlarded with quotations from, and references to, the literary productions of the Augustan era: while the so-called barbarisms and solecisms of the Gospel writers shocked the classic refinement of the purists, and were therefore carefully tabooed. Every sentence was modeled upon the inflated and turgid periods of Cicero, or pointed with some witty extract from Horace; and so it gradually came to pass that the heralds of Christianity became more concerned about the form and literary merit of their sermons than about the subject-matter they contained.

Bernardine emancipated himself from these unchristian methods, and discarded the fetters that fashion and conventionality threw around the preacher. Whenever he preached to the people, he spoke to them in the vernacular so as to be un-

derstood by all, treated his subject from their point of view, and was thus enabled to gather abundant fruit in his Master's vineyard. So great indeed was the concourse of people that thronged around the holy missioner that he was frequently obliged to preach to them from an improvised pulpit in the open square or on the market-place. Indeed, he was not particular, as the following incident shows, where he preached to the people.

It was Shrove Tuesday, and the whole population of a little town, where the Saint happened to be staying for the time being, had abandoned itself to the usual orgies of the carnival, and crowded the theatre in the evening. Bernardine proposed to his guardian, Fr. James of the Marches, a visit to the theatre. The superior was bewildered beyond measure by this strange proposal, but feeling assured that the holy missionary, who was then in the zenith of his career, was inspired by God to make it, he readily assented. Accompanied by a lay-brother, the Saint set out, and managed somehow to penetrate behind the scenes. Ensconced in some remote corner, he listened to the plaudits of the frenzied populace as they greeted some favorite comedian. At last the first act was concluded. Seizing this opportunity, Bernardine rushed on to the stage and began forthwith to preach to the audience. His features were pale, his voice trembled with emotion, his whole bearing was full of majestic dignity, whilst in impassioned language he inveighed against the vanities and pleasures of the world. "Do you know," he exclaimed in solemn accents, "where you are? You are standing on the edge of the precipice of hell," and there and then he advanced the proofs of his statement; for almost immediately there appeared before the eyes of the frightened audience the vision of a lost soul. "Why art thou damned?" demanded the Saint, as he turned towards the weird Apparition, "I am damned," answered the latter, "because I came hither to enjoy myself, and thus spent my life in forgetfulness of my God." It then went on to describe in detail some of the sins it had committed during life, and dwelt in particular on those usually occasioned by plays and entertainments such as

the one they were listening to that evening. "You have heard!" exclaimed the Saint, when the Apparition had finished. "Do penance now," he continued, "or you will all perish like this cursed soul!" The Apparition then vanished, and Bernardine returned to his monastery, only to find on his return the little church crowded with penitents eager to make their peace with God.

Such are in brief some of the characteristic features of Bernardine's preaching. His eloquence was that of a man who realized and felt the evil conditions which surrounded society in those days; it was the eloquence of an enthusiast in the cause of Jesus Christ—a cause he had deeply at heart, and which he strove to forward by every means in his power. The chroniclers of his age have left us the details of the prodigious success he attained in spite of the many obstacles that barred his progress.

This then was the task that Bernardine undertook: to make Jesus Christ live once more in the thoughts and affections of men, cultured and uncultured, noble and plebeian. With this aim before him he preached in the vernacular to the multitudes that thronged around him about the power and greatness of Jesus Christ. He impressed upon them the fact that the exemplar of a Christian's life was not to be found in the unbridled excesses of pagan gods and goddesses, but in the chastity, patience, meekness and humility of the lowliest of the sons of men. He often repeated to himself, and made his audience repeat, the Holy Name of Jesus; for that Name summed up all the prerogatives of the Son of God made man. He had always beside him, when he preached, the sacred monogram as a silent reminder to all that it was Jesus he preached, that it was Jesus he wished to impress upon their hearts, that it was to the life of Jesus he wished them to adapt their own lives. The Name of Jesus was to be their watchword against the insidious foes that used the veil of culture to hide their heathen tendencies. They might be cultured scholars if they willed, but they were to be above all things Christians in thought and manners. Such then was the burden of Saint Bernardine's message to the generation of men who surrounded him; and to bring that message

home to the people he used every artifice his native eloquence suggested. Every vice was ruthlessly exposed by him, virtue was exalted, the judgments of God proclaimed in language that brooked no contradiction.

The limits imposed upon us in this short sketch deter us from following the Saint on his Apostolical expeditions, and recording the numerous miracles that bestrew his path wherever he went, and lent support to his preaching. For well-nigh thirty years he was engaged in this work of the sacred ministry, and wherever he passed he was greeted as a popular and beloved herald of his Divine Master. The effects of his preaching were most marked; he preached Jesus Christ, and the people, at his bidding, turned to Jesus; the name of Jesus, ever on his own lips, was hymned and praised by the multitudes that crowded around him; and the sweet and glorious memories that thronged around it impressed themselves deeply upon the consciences of men. Long-standing feuds were brought to a satisfactory issue; peace and harmony entered where, before the advent of the Franciscan, there was naught but disorder and hateful revenge; hardened sinners were converted to God, and the spirit of luxury, that poisoned the spiritual and religious life of clergy and laity alike, gave way to sentiments of unworldliness and self-sacrifice.

The following incident will serve to illustrate the stupendous power exerted by Bernardine over his audience. The Saint came to Rome to preach in the year 1424. As a result of his labors, "In June of that year," writes the Secretary of State, Infessura, "a great funeral pile of playing cards, lottery tickets, musical instruments, false hair, and feminine adornments, was erected on the Capital, and all these things were burned." A similar scene was enacted at Bologna, and on this occasion the vendors of dice came to the Saint to complain that since he had begun to preach in their midst their occupation was gone, and their trade ruined. Bernadine took compassion on them; he showed them how to manufacture in wax the monogram of the Holy Name, and so great was the demand for these sacred symbols that the erstwhile ruined tradesmen retrieved their

fortune, and became much richer than they were before. To show, moreover, how successful the Saint had been in his endeavors to propagate the devotion of the Holy Name under this new form, it will suffice to mention that as early as the year 1427 a number of priests had placed the monogram over the principal altar in their churches; others had it inscribed on the walls; others preserved the banner on which Bernardine had painted it surrounded with rays, and which accompanied him on all his Apostolical wanderings; many of the cities of Italy, like Siena, where it is to be seen to this day, caused the sacred monogram to be placed in large characters outside the Town-hall.

The novel form in which this old devotion was enshrined was, of course, objected to. The practice, it was freely said by some, savored of superstition, and led to idolatry. The people, it was feared, might look upon the tablet as a kind of talisman, and might adore the symbol itself instead of Him whose Name was inscribed upon it. These thoughts and fears were noised abroad by Andrew Biglio, an Augustinian Friar, and by the partisans of Manfred, a Dominican. Bernardine defended the form of the devotion, and gave a clear exposition of doctrine on the subject. In spite of this, however, his enemies triumphed for the nonce, and the Saint was cited to Rome, where Martin the Fifth, the then reigning Pope, gave him a cool reception. His enemies spread abroad the report that Bernardine was accused and found guilty of heresy, and wherever he went the finger of scorn was pointed at him.

Meanwhile the humble son of St. Francis took no notice of his slanderers and their accusations, but calmly awaited the decision of the Commission of Inquiry appointed by the Pope—resolved to submit to and obey that decision, whatever it might be. In these circumstances, St. John Capistran, the friend and disciple of Bernardine, came to the assistance of his confrère. He had already acquired a fame for his sanctity and preaching, so when he boldly entered Rome, holding aloft the banner of the Holy Name, the people hailed his advent with delight; and the Pope, witnessing the universal satisfaction his pres-

ence caused, gave him permission to defend Bernardine. On the day appointed for the session of the Commission, so clearly did those two champions of the Holy Name answer all the objections brought forward against the new devotion, that the whole inquiry resulted in the triumphant justification of Bernardine. Martin the Fifth, with all his clergy, joined in a solemn procession in honor of the Holy Name; he moreover ordered Bernardine to preach at St. Peter's, and in the other churches of the Capitol. For eighty-two days the Saint was thus engaged, and Æneas Piccolomini, afterwards Pope Pius II., has chronicled these Apostolical labors. "All Rome," he writes, "flocked to his discourses. He frequently had Cardinals, and sometimes even the Pope himself amongst his audience, and all with one voice bore witness to his marvelous power and success."

This striking triumph encouraged Saint Bernardine in his undertaking; he was helped, moreover, in his great task by such men as St. John Capistran and St. James of the Marches, and in general by the whole body of the Franciscans. It served also to perpetuate the devotion in the Church of God. A few years later, for instance, we find St. John Capistran leading the heroic army of John Humgades under the protection of the Holy Name. Joan of Arc, an illustrious and saintly member of the Third Order, inscribed the sacred monogram on her standard, and died with the name of Jesus on her lips. Confraternities of the Holy Name were established everywhere; St. Bernardine himself founded one in Rome, the center of which was at the (since famous) Church of the Gesu. St. Ignatius of Loyola* chose the monogram for the arms of the glorious institute he founded. In 1530 Clement VII. approved a special office of the Holy Name, and allowed the Franciscans to celebrate a feast in its honor on the 14th of January, the anniversary of Bernardine's signal triumph at Rome. Finally, in the year 1772, Clement XIII. extended this feast to the whole Christian world, and fixed for its celebration the second Sunday after Epiphany.

*St. Ignatius was a member of the Roman Confraternity of the Holy Name.

Bernardine had by his preaching and strenuous efforts prepared the way for all these glorious results; he had the distinction of having been chosen by God to bring this devotion home to the people. It was in his hands a powerful instrument to undo the mischief caused by the literary dilettanti, who strove their utmost to haul down the standard of Jesus Christ, and set up in its stead the impure ideals of pagan irreligion and immorality. Through it he renewed and transformed to a great extent the social and political life of the cities of his beloved Italy—and for his fearless defence of, and staunch adherence to, this sacred cause, even if for naught else, his memory shall be held in benediction by a grateful Christian posterity.

The events narrated in the two last paragraphs offer the most salient features of St. Bernardine's career. Whilst his progress through the Italian peninsula was marked by one long series of Apostolic triumphs, God was pleased to sanction the authority and doctrine of this servant by the gift of miracles. Indeed, the path of the humble Franciscan was strewn with wonders. The sick were brought to him and a sign of the cross on their forehead restored them to health. The tablets on which Bernardine inscribed the Holy Name were made use of by the Saint to work some wonderful cures. Even the Friar's enemies were the objects of his attention and solicitude. A man who had heaped scorn and derision on him fell from a roof one day and was well-nigh killed. Bernardine, hearing of the occurrence, ran to the spot, gave his blessing to the unfortunate wretch, and with his blessing gave him back the use of his limbs. On another occasion the holy missionary was journeying to Mantua, and found his way blocked by a deep stream; he begged the ferryman to row him over, but this the latter refused to do because the Saint had no money to pay his fare. Nothing daunted, Bernardine calmly spread his mantle on running waters, and on this miraculous raft crossed over in safety.

Another day, as he was preaching on the text of the Apocalypse, "A great sign appeared in the heavens," a star of won-

derful brightness suddenly in broad daylight appeared over his head, and was seen by the surrounding crowd. All these wonderful prodigies, and many more, too numerous to relate, served to enhance Bernardine's reputation for sanctity in the minds of the people; and long before his death he was venerated as a Saint by the multitudes who thronged to listen to his preaching.

In the midst of all these external occupations the work of personal sanctity was advancing steadily in the soul of Bernardine; he was a living exemplar of those virtues he wished his hearers to practise. He was a model of regular observance to all his brethren, and his energy in the great work of the Observantine Reform never slackened. Towards the end of his career he associated John Capistran in his Apostolate, and these two saintly souls vied with each other in the practice of humility and obedience. In turn they commanded one another, and never undertook any great work without consulting each other. They fought together under the same banner of the Holy Name of Jesus, and participated in each other's triumphs, just as they shared each other's humiliations.

In the year 1438 Bernardine was appointed, as we have already stated elsewhere, Vicar-General of the Cisalpine Provinces of the Observantine Reform; thus a serious responsibility devolved upon him. In the government of the Order he was ably assisted by St. John Capistran, and St. James of the Marches, another of his disciples. Nevertheless, the duties that crowded themselves into his daily life, combined with the incessant labors of the Apostolate, which he never relaxed, taxed his gradually waning energies to their utmost extent, until at last he broke down under the strain.

In the year 1444 we find him preaching at Aquila in the kingdom of Naples. Here death was awaiting him. As soon as he felt the touch of its icy hand, he asked for, and received the last consolations of Holy Church, then, following the example of his Seraphic Father, he caused himself to be laid on the ground, and in this humble attitude passed away to his eternal reward. He was sixty-four years old when he died. The

Friars were chanting vespers, and the last words the Saint heard upon earth summed up his whole life, and were emblematic of his Apostolic career: "Father, I have manifested Thy Name to the men whom Thou hast given me out of the world. . . . I pray for them: I pray not for the world. . . . and now I come to Thee."

When the news of Bernardine's death spread abroad there was universal regret. "The Star of Italy" it was said, had set; the Saint was dead. Saint James of the Marches was miraculously informed about the sad event. He was preaching on the market square of Todi, at the very hour when Bernardine was breathing his last, when suddenly the preacher stopped, remained silent for a short while, and then exclaimed: "Dear people, let us weep and lament: at this hour a great column of Holy Church has been broken by death; the most brilliant star of Italy has disappeared."

Numbers flocked to the Saint's tomb, and many were the miracles wrought there. St. John Capistran, faithful to his life-long attachment to, and veneration for, his saintly brother, longed to see his name enrolled amongst the canonized Saints of the Church, and worked with untiring energy to further the cause of his friend's glorification. Eugenius the Fourth, urged by the incessant request of St. John, appointed a Commission of Cardinals and Bishops to make the necessary inquiry into the virtues and sanctity of the humble son of St. Francis, but he died before the Commission had finished its labors, and so for a time the canonization had to be put off.

On the accession of Nicholas the Fifth, however, St. John renewed his efforts, and a new Commission was appointed. The report was favorable, and on the 27th of February, 1450, six years after the holy missionary's death, he was formally canonized by Nicholas the Fifth, to the intense joy of the whole of Italy. Thus were the efforts of St. John Capistran crowned with success, and both he and St. James of the Marches had the consoling satisfaction of being able to venerate and honor as a Saint of God him to whom they were bound by the closest ties of friendship and love while on earth.

THE NAME OF JESUS

Oh, sweetest name! Oh, name of grace and love!
Most High, most low!
Most great, most humble, human and divine,
That man can know:
That telleth us alike of heavenly joy
And earthly woe.

The mighty angel, pure from blight of sin,
Who bore to earth
This gentlest, tenderest name, ne'er understood
Its priceless worth,
Nor fathomed the unfathomed depths of love
That gave it birth.

Low at Messiah's feet the Jewish maid
Knelt to adore,
And worshipped Him with every sacred name
The ancient law
Gave unto God, patriarch's and prophets knew
Ages before.

But when, with yearning, mother-love, she let
Her soft lips press
The little face upraised, or tiny hand
Lifted to bless,
"Jesus, my Jesus!" broke from her full heart
In fond caress.

"Jesus!" first word on simple, childish tongues,
In guileless prayer;
"Jesus!" last murmur on the sinner's lips
Saved from despair,
Or dying saint's, who sees heaven's portals ope,
And Jesus there.

Not unto dread and mighty names that speak
In awful tone,
God's power and justice, every knee is bowed;
Jesus alone
Doth claim the fealty of adoring love
As all His own.

Ave Maria.

APPARITION

TO

VEN. JOAN OF ARC V

DOMREMY, FRANCE

1429

Gentle crook! Oh, that I never
For the sword had bartered thee!
Sacred oak! why didst thou ever
From thy branches speak to me?
Would that thou to me in splendor,
Queen of Heaven hadst ne'er come down!
Take all claim, I must surrender—
Take, oh take, away thy crown!

J. C. F. Von Schiller.

THERE are in the great human family certain privileged nations whose providential destiny has been and still is to exercise far beyond their territorial frontiers precious and fecund influences in aid of the highest interests of religion and of civilization, and in this manner to link themselves in closest ties to other countries of the earth. Such has been thy destiny, France, and such is still thy destiny. Thou hast been and thou art a world-nation; and when citizens of other countries, beneficiaries of thy favors, with hearts overflowing with gratitude and affection, come to thy shores, they will refuse to believe that they are unwelcomed by thee, and unbidden to take part in thy sweetest joys and most sacred festivities.

"JESUS, MARY," ON HER BANNER.

When her last ray of hope at Orleans was sinking, God sent Joan d'Arc to save France and His Church. Sweet, beautiful, sublime Jeanne! Most sweet, most beautiful, most sublime figure of womanhood, outside of the Virgin Mother of Nazareth, known to history.

Archbishop Ireland, on the Maid of Orleans,

In the year 1412 was born a peasant girl named Joan of Arc, who, until she was seventeen years old, was unable to handle a sword or mount a horse. To her modern Frenchmen probably owe the fact that the Sovereign of England does not now wear the crown of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, Ireland, and France. No purely secular heroine has attained to such celebrity as Joan of Arc.

That she is one of the chief glories of France is the conviction of every impartial mind which is familiar with a history redolent of glory. After the greatest generals of France had failed, she conducted a successful campaign against the enemies of her country.

Her birthplace was the village of Domremy, nigh to Vaucouleurs, on the border of Champagne and Lorraine. There her father, Jacques d'Arc, and her mother, Isabelle, simple peasants, esteemed for their industry and virtue, lived laboriously, comforted only by their three sons and two daughters. From their earliest years these children were trained to labor and to fear God. Of the five, the daughter, Jeanne, had been noted for piety from her infancy. Loving work, she was as expert with a spade as with a needle, could spin with the best, and was as trusty among the hills with the sheep as if under the eye of her mother. A joyous child, companionable and fond of play, Jeanne was even fonder of prayer. In the midst of a merry game she would slip away, kneel behind a hedge, breathe a prayer and return to be as merry as the merriest. To the Blessed Virgin she was especially devout. Near to Domremy were several chapels dedicated to Our Lady. With a candle, a garland of field flowers, an orison, Jeanne embellished each altar. It all the offices of the village church she was faithful, and most exemplary in confessing and in receiving the Holy Communion. Obedient to her parents, she was also a loving sister, a kindly neighbor, generous to the poor, tender to the ailing. All these adornments of womanhood Jeanne d'Arc had acquired without ever learning the esteemed art of reading or of writing.

These details may have interested de Beaudricourt, though

it is more than probable that he knew many peasant girls no less virtuous or pious. However, this was not the whole of the story. In her thirteenth year—thus she told the captain—and often during the three years that had since passed, heavenly beings had appeared to her and had spoken to her. Jeanne's home adjoined the parish church; and it was in the garden, close to the church wall, on a summer's day in 1425, at mid-day, that a glorious light shone on her, and out of the light issued a voice, saying: "Jeanne, be good and pious, go often to church!" The resplendent light, the mysterious voice, affrighted the girl, as, certainly, they would have affrighted you or me. Who spoke, she knew not. Whence came that indescribable radiance and the voice whose speech she could never forget? A second, a third time, she heard the voice, though perceiving no form. Then a form appeared, a commanding form accompanied by a multitude of unearthly, though real, beings. Finally she grew into the knowledge that the wondrous light she had first seen, more lustrous than the noonday sun, was but the shadow of the splendor of the Archangel Michael; the voice was the Archangel's voice; the multitude with him was a squadron of his immortal, invincible army of angels.

The mysterious voice, on that first summer-day, counselled her to be a Christian, and no more; but, as time passed, portentous words were spoken to her. She had heard of the wars. Her parents were loyal to the crown. Before her day, Domremy had suffered from the enemies of France. The history of her country, she knew well; the traditions were familiar to her; but one can easily understand that the peasant girl of thirteen was not prepared to assume that she had been selected to save France, to rout victorious armies, to make a king and unite a nation. Still, Michael, promising prudently, suggested much, and finally ordered. She had a mission from heaven, he said, to succor the King of France. During three years, the simple girl listened, trembled, wondered, feared. Then Our Blessed Lady and two sainted women came to aid her: Catharine and Margaret. They encouraged her, calmed her. To neither

mother, nor father, nor confessor, did she disclose her secret. Alone she bore her burden, day after day, year after year. A rare sacrifice was demanded of her by God, if her guides were trustworthy. The parental home, mere human love of every sort, she must renounce, if Michael, Catharine and Margaret spake true. Should she doubt? To prove her confidence in them and in their word, she made a vow of virginity. Come what may, henceforward she is the Lord's.

When, after three years of companionship with the Archangel and with Saints Catharine and Margaret, Jeanne first presented herself to Robert de Beaudricourt, at Vaucouleurs, it was not to please herself, or to satisfy an idle fancy. She would not have dared to take a step so unbecoming to a modest girl, were it not that the directing Archangel, and her guiding Saints as well, had insisted, saying: "You must seek out Robert de Beaudricourt, and have him give you an armed escort to bring you to the dauphin; him you shall crown King at Rheims, and drive the foreigner from the kingdom." To St. Michael, to SS. Catharine and Margaret, Jeanne put a most natural question. "How," she asked, "shall I, who am only a peasant girl, give orders to men-at-arms?" Whereupon Archangel and Saints responded: "Child of God, great-hearted child, you needs must go; God will aid you."

Dismissed by de Beaudricourt as one bereft of reason, Jeanne was not discouraged. She returned home. Her parents were unaware of her venturesome journey. She had left them to visit a cousin. As of old, she worked in the house and in the field; but the Saints were not silent. Indeed, they commanded her anew to go forth and free the city of Orleans from the enemy. No longer could she resist. In the early part of January, 1429, once more she set forth, without saying a word to father or mother. Durant Laxart, who still had faith in her, accompanied her to Vaucouleurs. There de Beaudricourt was as obstinate as ever. The girl's claims were not lessened by time. "No one in the world," said she, "neither the king nor the duke, nor the daughter of the King of Scotland, nor anyone else, can recover the kingdom of France; from me alone shall

it have aid, although I had rather spin alongside of my poor mother; for such is not my condition in life. But I must go and do that; for so my Lord wishes." Then once again they asked: "Who is your Lord?" and she gave the same answer: "He is God."

The people of Vaucouleurs saw Jeanne and heard her words; and they believed in her. They noted her modesty, her piety, her sincerity. The soldiers trusted her; they had faith in her mission. People and soldiers united to provide for her journey to the king, buying a horse, armor and arms. As she was called to do a warrior's work, Jeanne determined to dress like a man.

When de Beaudricourt learned the temper of the people, he consulted the royal council; and at length, on February 23, permitted her to set out for Chinon, where Charles was playing king; nay, more, he presented her with a sword. Long before she reached Chinon the name of Jeanne the Maid was known in camps, villages, cities. At Orleans they had heard of her, and of her promise to raise the siege, and a deputation of officers had been sent to meet her at Chinon and to report whether there was, indeed, reason for hoping.

Having placed the king on his throne, it was her fortune henceforward to be thwarted. More than one military plan was entered upon which she did not approve. Too well she felt the end was nigh at hand. Still she continued to jeopard her person in battle as before; severe wounds had not taught her caution; and at length she was made prisoner by the Burgundians, and finally given up to the English.

The object now was to vitiate the coronation of Charles the Seventh as the work of a witch, and for this end Joan was tried for sorcery. She resolutely defended herself from the absurd accusation. Never from the foundations of the earth was there such a trial as this, if it were laid open in all its beauty of defense and all its malignity of attack.

O child of France! shepherdess, peasant girl! trodden under foot by all around thee, how I honor thy flashing intellect, quick as the lightning and as true to its mark, that ran before

France and laggard Europe by many a century, confounding the malice of the insnarer and making dumb the oracles of falsehood! "Would you examine me as a witness against myself?" was the question by which many times she defied their arts. The result of this trial was the condemnation of Joan to be burnt alive.

Woman, sister! there are some things which you do not execute as well as your brother, man—no, nor ever will. Yet, sister, woman, cheerfully and with the love that burns in depths of admiration, I acknowledge that you can do one thing as well as the best of men—you can die grandly! On the 20th of May, 1431, being then about nineteen years of age, Joan of Arc underwent her martyrdom. She was conducted before mid-day, guarded by eight hundred spearmen, to a platform of prodigious height, constructed of wooden billets, supported by occasional walls of lath and plaster, and traversed by hollow spaces in every direction for the creation of air-currents.

With an undaunted soul, but a meek and saintly demeanor, the maiden encountered her terrible fate. The executioner had been directed to apply his torch from below. He did so. The fiery smoke rose upward in billowing volumes. A monk was then standing at Joan's side.

Wrapt up in his sublime office, he saw not the danger, but still persisted in his prayers. Even then, when the last enemy was racing up the fiery stairs to seize her, even at that moment did this noblest of girls think only for him—the one friend that would not forsake her—and not for herself, bidding him with her last breath to care for his own preservation, but to leave her to God.

"Go down," she said; "lift up the cross before me, that I may see it in dying, and speak to me pious words to the end." Her last audible word was the name of Jesus. A soldier who had sworn to throw a fagot on the pile turned away, a penitent for life, on hearing her last prayer to her Saviour. He had seen, he said, a white dove soar to heaven from the ashes where the brave girl had stood.

The executioner gathers up the remains. A few bones he

finds and a little dust. These he looked for; but with terror does he perceive a heart; and he trembles as, touching it, he feels it warm; warm, not with the faint heat exhaled from wood-ashes, but with that generous ardor that smoulders in the members of the Saint. Trusting not to the fagots he had nourished the flames with oil and sulphur. The heart should have been burned to a crisp. Now he remembers that, before mounting the pyre, the girl-victim had besought the bystanders to give her a cross; and that, none being at hand, a gentle English soldier had formed one, roughly, out of a couple of bits of stick. Kissing this rude cross devoutly, she had placed it over her heart, close to her flesh. The wooden cross was no more; but the heart it had pressed, remained. Was this a sign? Neither the executioner, nor the curious onlookers, who wondered with him, dare say yes. Bones, ashes, and even the heart, were cast into the river Seine. An English Cardinal, the Cardinal of Winchester, so ordered.

Did that young girl deserve the punishment meted out to her on the 30th of May, 1431, in the market-place of Rouen? To-day, we know the truth about her, and men of every land love to tell her story; and most all, those who, like her, glory in the cross and believe and trust in Him whom her burning lips greeted as her pure soul flew heavenward.

WHY CANONIZE JOAN OF ARC?

PASTORAL LETTER OF HIS LORDSHIP, THE BISHOP OF ORLEANS, ON THE CAUSE OF JOAN OF ARC.

My Very Dear Brethren: Man's faith in the admirable virtue of Joan of Arc is neither of to-day nor of yesterday. When questioned by the judges at the process of rehabilitation, the humble people of Domremy rendered the most flattering tribute to the childhood and youth of their glorious compatriot. She had left in her native village an indelible memory of goodness, sweetness, simplicity, candor and piety.—"There was no one like her."

Our predecessors in Orleans declared in their turn that they mistook her for an angel of God when upon an April evening, she entered their walls at the head of an army, whose soldiers, converted by her, had replaced (for a time) licentious songs by hymns and canticles; blasphemies by decorous speech; and had converted the loose habits of the camp into ways of an austere morality. They remembered and spoke of her tears of devotion at Holy Communion, her prudence in battle, her piety and compassion for the wounded and the dying, her meekness and magnanimity under insult, her firmness and her modesty in counsel.

These beautiful accounts are confirmed by her confessor, Pasquerel, and her equerry, d'Aulon, who followed her throughout unto the end, by d'Alençon and Dunois who enjoyed her friendship, and by many others who drew a sketch of Joan which, even to the casual observer, reveals the glorious heroine.

The whole man is never known until he has passed through affliction and death—it is trial and death which perfect life. The sufferings of Joan and her death; the prison of Rouen and the funeral pyre of the Vieux-Marché have surrounded her with an aureole so brightly luminous as hardly to have been equaled by any other who has similarly fought and suffered trial and death. More than one have compared the judgment, the condemnation and the agony of Joan to the judgment, condemnation and agony of Jesus. We cannot urge this comparison without something of blasphemous irreverence; however, those who have attempted it, merit respect; their idea is explainable; it is more than ingenious—it is solid; and surely it is no small glory for this martyr* child to be even thought of in this connection.

If Juvénal des Ursins, Archbishop of Rheims, Guillaume Chartier, Archbishop of Paris, and Richard of Longueil, Bishop of Coutances, who were commissioned by Calixtus III.

1. We do not pretend to employ this word—Martyr—or in other places holy or saint applied to the Venerable Joan other than in a general sense and in one authorized by the Church.

to preside over the process of rehabilitation, had been able to question certain Englishmen, would they not have obtained, even from them, confessions of great value? Would not certain soldiers have testified to the vision of the maiden's soul, taking flight under the form of a dove, just as in later years the spirit of St. Theresa escaped from its mortal habitation at the last hour?

Would not the executioner, who applied the torch, have revealed the fact that under the glowing coals he had found the virgin's heart untouched and throbbing; that nothing—neither fire nor boiling oil had been able to affect this flesh, hallowed by love of country, of our Lord and His Saints; since it had pleased God to manifest by a miracle His judgment upon the abominable crime which had just been consummated. Would not this same executioner have sunk, trembling, on his knees before the tribunal of Rheims, as he did before the confessional, where he went to implore absolution, exclaiming: "We are lost, we have burned a Saint!"

But has not Heaven itself proclaimed the virtues of Joan? Truly, who would admit that such an intimate communication could have been established and could have continued for seven years between the Maid and St. Michael, St. Catharine and St. Margaret, had not Joan led a life worthy of such favors? I know the teachings of Theology concerning this sort of graces; I know that it holds them to be gratuitous; I reverence this doctrine as I reverence everything that pertains to my faith, but I know also that Almighty God wishes and seeks fitting reasons for all the wonders which it pleases Him to accomplish. Joan herself was convinced that sin woull deprive her of these visions. When asked whether she was in the state of grace, she replied: "If I am not, may God so render me. If I am, may God preserve me therein." She declared she would prefer death to mortal sin, and she added "that she believed St. Michael, St. Catharine and St. Margaret would abandon her in case she offended the good God."

This view is that of common sense. Finally, was it not because of the virtue which he saw resplendent in her that the

Archangel addressed her by this singular title, *Daughter of God.* "Go, daughter of God! Go! Go!"

Joan's reputation for sanctity has been abiding in the Church. The chronicles of the fifteenth century proclaim it, except, of course, those which are partial to the English cause.

La Saussaye inscribes our venerable Joan in his Martyrology, certainly not among the Saints (he could not—should not do that)—but among those pious souls venerated and honored by the Church.

Benedict XIV treats of the cause of Joan in his incomparable work on the canonization of Saints and, on the authority of one of the greatest Roman advocates of this time, Alibrandi, discreetly admitted his astonishment that her cause had not been introduced.

Symphorian Guyon, after quoting La Saussaye, celebrates her merits "as a martyr for her virtue."

Our age, curious concerning all that is interesting in history, has had the good fortune to have Quicherat edit the process of Joan of Arc. By this process we have come to know and see what was unknown and unseen in the past. Through these manuscripts arranged, translated and signed by enemies, we are enabled to judge of the character of Joan of Arc. Numerous histories and documents, sometimes learned, at all times serious, tracing things to their very source, have shown her to us such as she is. Consequences have not been slow to follow. There are none among those who claim any knowledge of history who are not convinced of the virtues of the Maid. And if proof were needed, it would suffice perhaps to state that when we requested the Catholic prelates to send us letters associating themselves with the humble but urgent prayer which we were addressing to the Sovereign Pontiff, beseeching him to beatify the liberator of Orleans, more than eight hundred responded to our appeal—Cardinals, Bishops, Abbés, Rectors of Institutions. The five divisions of the earth know our Joan and venerate her.

In order perfectly to embody this past and present homage, Mgr. Dupanloup resolved to present the cause of Joan of Arc

to the Holy See. In 1869, the numerous bishops, grouped around him and sympathizing with the sentiments of his noble soul, signed a petition praying that the Sacred Congregation of Rites might inquire and examine into the cause of Joan of Arc surnamed, "The Maid of Orleans."

As Ordinary it became his duty to begin the process. This he did in 1874. He established a tribunal under the presidency of M. L'abbé Branchereau. The Postulators were Mgr. Desnoyers and M. Collin. In 1876, the Archbishop took to Rome the work of this tribunal.

M. Captier, at that time Procurator-General of the Congregation of St. Sulpice, was charged with the duty of watching (in the character of Postulator) over the interest of the cause in the Eternal City. No one in Orleans has forgotten that the great bishop breathed his last on the eleventh day of October, 1878.

M. Captier invited Mgr. Couillié, who had succeeded Mgr. Dupanloup, to continue the investigation. He exerted himself to ascertain whether the memory of the virtues of Joan of Arc still endured, not among the learned, for that fact was established and well established, but among the people.

The tribunal of 1874 again resumed its sittings, and at the proper time the result of its investigations was once more placed before the Congregation of Rites.

The examination of the report was long and minute. The Promoter Fidei, Mgr. Caprara, obliged by his office to offer objection, spared none of the resources of a wonderfully fertile and well regulated mind. On his side, the advocate Alibrandi, an eminent man, with the aid of M. Minetti, and chiefly of M. Captier, made an elegant and noble plea. Finally, the presiding judge, His Eminence Cardinal Parocchi, delivered upon the virtues of Joan, a discourse so vigorous and so eloquent that Pope Leo XIII. was heard to remark that nothing more powerful could be conceived.

The result of all these efforts was that, in 1894, just twenty years after the commencement of the process, Mgr. Couillié, Archbishop of Lyon, Administrator-Apostolic of the Diocese of

Orleans, received the gratifying intelligence that the cause was introduced, and Joan declared venerable.

Dating from this time the efforts of the Bishop of Orleans ceased. Everything was left to the wisdom of the Congregation of Rites.

From 1894 to 1895, we conducted the process called the *non-cult* of Joan of Arc. This was very brief. Our conclusions were admitted by the Congregation of Rites in 1896.

In 1897, we received the order to establish a new tribunal which from this time in the name of the Sovereign Pontiff recorded information upon the heroic virtues of the Venerable Joan.

The tribunal opened on the first of March, 1897, and closed on the twenty-second of November of the same year. We held 122 sessions of, at least, eight hours a day. Immediately after the final adjournment I took to Rome the proceedings of this tribunal, which contained about 3,000 pages.

In the year 1898 the officials of the *Rota* examined the details of the record of the proceedings with respect to its judicial forms.

In 1899 the venerable Cardinal Archbishop of Paris and the Bishop of Orleans, prepared an abstract of proceedings upon the reliability of the publications of Quicherat, relative to Joan of Arc. The Promoter of the Faith, acting by virtue of special permission from the Pope, accepted these documents without recourse to the ordinary formalities.

During the course of this same year, 1899, the advocate commenced the preparation of his plan from the documents we had furnished him. This he continued in 1900. However, His Lordship, the Promoter of the Faith, raised some objections. The advocate has answered them. The discussion before the consultors will open on the 17th of the approaching December.

This first public act of the Congregation of Rites is very important. If, as we ardently hope, the process is pushed forward, doubtless it will be renewed with the same formalities of pleading, first before the cardinals, then before the Sovereign Pontiff, to whose determination will be left the final decision

in this most important step of the procedures. This is why we wish to recommend its success to all who are interested in the work.

Believing firmly in the greatness of Joan, in the innocence of her child-like soul, in her sanctity as head of the army and as a victim, we recall what was said to us, not by a Frenchman, but by the great Belgian historian, Godfrey Kurth: "Monseigneur, I do not know history, nobody knows it, although I have studied it for forty years. But I have never met, among all its glorious characters, since the time of Christ and His Virgin Mother, a soul which appears to be more perfect, more elevated, than that of Joan of Arc." Convinced that our country will unite around Joan of Arc in a spirit of Christian and patriotic joy, that at her altars atheism will not declare its hatred; we exhort the religious of our diocese and all pious souls to offer a communion on the 17th of December for the success of this cause of the Venerable Joan of Arc. Those who cannot communicate may at least recite a prayer for that intention. We exhort the priests of our diocese to offer up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the same intention. On the 17th of December, the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed in the chapels of our cloistered communities from eight o'clock in the morning until six in the evening. At six o'clock Benediction will be given. We will be happy to have the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in other communities, where it is possible, but we lay no obligation upon them.

We authorize our reverend pastors to expose the Blessed Sacrament for the same intention wherever and whenever they may find a sufficient number of adorers, be it on the 17th of December or on the Sunday previous. At least on the preceding Sunday, Benediction may be given, during which the rosary may be recited.

We think in all loyalty that everything that could be done on the part of this land to promote the cause has been accomplished. The final word must come from God. In supplication, then, let us pray.

STANISLAUS,
Bishop of Orleans.

November 18, 1901.

THE BEATIFICATION OF JOAN OF ARC

RECOMMENDED TO OUR PRAYERS BY HIS HOLINESS, LEO XIII.

The Holy Father desires before he dies to give his children one more intercessor in heaven, to place upon the altars of the Church and present to the veneration of the faithful one more of those remarkable personages whom God raises up from time to time to be models of virtue, marvels of sanctity, doers of mighty deeds in the cause of truth and justice.

The heavens show forth the glory of God, the earth is His footstool, nature through all her works displays His power and wisdom. But nowhere do His divine attributes shine forth more splendidly than in the life of a Saint. As living beings surpass inanimate matter, as the moral order surpasses the physical, so Christian sanctity, divine in its origin, supernatural in its operations, is far more sublime than anything that nature can produce.

In honoring the Saints, we honor God, for we know that all their virtues and all their holiness were the gift of God. This truth they themselves clearly discerned, and hence they were always humble even amid the praises of men. In the words of the Queen of Saints, they were always saying: "He that is mighty hath done great things to me; and holy is His name." For they well knew that they could not even pronounce the name of Jesus in a spirit of faith without the Holy Ghost. It is true they co-operated of their own free will with God's graces, and thus merited an ever-increasing out-pouring of His favors in this life and eternal glory in the next. But they were deeply penetrated with the truth of the great Apostle's words when he said: "By the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace in me hath not been void." And even though they had labored more abundantly than others, they could say with all truth: "Yet not I, but the grace of God with me."

In the Saints, therefore, we praise and glorify God who has done such great things to men, who has shown forth in them His mercy, His love, His generosity, His sanctity, His

power to lift up the needy from the dunghill and make them sit with princes, even with the angelic princes of the heavenly hierarchy. He hath regarded the lowliness of his servants and that is why all generations shall call them blessed.

The beatification of Joan of Arc would be most opportune at the present time. She comes before the modern world dazzling it by her heroism, winning it by her sweet maidenhood, calling forth the admiration of Catholics and non-Catholics, Frenchmen and Englishmen. She is the ideal and champion of the legitimate aspirations of the day, while at the same time she corrects the errors by which those aspirations are too often clouded.

To-day men are crying out for freedom and autonomy. Joan gave freedom and autonomy to a down-trodden people. Men are crying out for progress and national prosperity. Joan opened a new era of progress and prosperity to her country. To-day there is a desire to enlarge the sphere of woman's usefulness. Joan led an army to battle and refounded a kingdom. To-day we long for peace and fraternity. Joan put an end to a hundred years' war and two rival nations forget their differences when they think of her.

But what a rebuke is her life to the errors that beset us! The great mistake of our times is the attempt to divorce the natural from the supernatural. Man in his folly thinks he is sufficient for himself; he needs no God, no religion to help him carry out his enterprises. If anyone wants religion let him indulge his tastes in private, but let him not be dragging religion into the affairs of daily life. It is too sacred a thing for such contact. It is of another world and is out of place when it tries to meddle with the affairs of this world. Let God remain in the churches where we may, if we please, make a ceremonious call on Him once a week, but let the doors be shut during the days of labor. What has religion to do with business, with politics, with war, with social life?

But Joan comes before us in shining armor with her white banner of Jesus and Mary in one hand, her drawn sword in the other, to enter the field of war, of politics, of social life, in the

name of God. She tells us that God's providence guides the destinies of nations as well as of individuals, that nothing here below escapes His all-seeing eye, nothing is far from His all-pervading presence, that nothing can happen but by His command or with His permission. She tells us that by Him kings reign and that of Him are ordained the powers that be, and that if He humbles a nation for its correction He can also raise it up again. She tells us that every enterprise of life ought to be undertaken for Him and in His name.

She teaches us reverence for authority. She sought out the King in his retirement and humiliation when almost all had forsaken him, because he was the lawful ruler. She insisted on having him crowned and anointed by God's minister. She showed respect to her very judges who in defiance of all law and justice condemned her to a terrible death.

But above all she teaches us how retirement, contemplation, mysticism, so far from unfitting one for great actions, are the best preparation for them. The ordinary good Christian practises ordinary virtue; the contemplative does the deeds of heroes and of giants. His is a life of union with God and partakes of the power of God. Witness the life of St. Bernard, St. Augustine, St. Francis Xavier, and so many other contemplatives and mystics who have achieved such marvels in the active life.

Joan's vocation, certainly an extraordinary one, made it necessary for her to don the accoutrements of a warrior, to live among men and be a leader of men. But she never thought of trying to ape the ways of men. Strong in her vow of virginity, she ever displayed the simplicity, the gentleness, the modesty, the delicate refinement that are woman's crown and glory, that charm the upright, shame the dissolute and compel the respect of all.

She rides forth then, that warrior maiden, that mirror of knighthood and of womanhood, the champion of the Apostleship of Prayer, fighting by day and praying by night that God's kingdom may come, that Christian principles and Christian charity may reign throughout the world.

Let us pray then with the Holy Father that we may soon be able to invoke her as Blessed, and that her beautiful life and powerful intercession may inspire the faithful with fresh ardor and win over to the truth those who still dwell amid the darkness of error.

POPE HONORS JOAN OF ARC

An imposing ceremony preceding the beatification of Joan d'Arc occurred in the Vatican, January 6th, 1904. The Pope was acclaimed by the great audience. He delivered a speech before the Congregation of Rites, in which he said he hoped that Frenchmen, having such glorious ancestry, would be worthy of them and would especially appreciate the present distinction conferred by the Church and put an end to the campaign against religion.

BEATIFICATION

The decree on the Heroic Virtues of Joan of Arc was read on the Feast of the Epiphany in the Consistorial Hall of the Vatican Palace, in the presence of the Holy Father, who was surrounded by the members of his court and a number of Cardinals and distinguished visitors to Rome. In the decree a sketch is given of the Maid of Domremy, who is described as having emulated the courage of Deborah, Jael and Judith. The struggle which she made for her country is noticed in some detail, and the account of the final scene is as follows: "Her cause having been tried by most corrupt judges, the innocent virgin was condemned to be burnt and bravely endured the penalty on the 30th May, 1431, her eyes fixed on the crucifix, her lips pouring forth fervent prayers and asking prayers for the authors of her death in the presence of the great crowd there assembled." The steps taken in the cause of her beatification are then mentioned, and it is added that "the Holy Father decreed that in the case of Joan of Arc such sure knowledge had been acquired with regard to the theological

virtues of faith, hope and charity towards God and the neighbor, and with respect to the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, and the like, that it was safe to proceed, further, that is, to the discussion of the four miracles." This decree his Holiness ordered to be published and inserted in the Acts of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

The decree having been promulgated, Mgr. Touchet, Bishop of Orleans, thanked the Holy Father for having at the commencement of a Pontificate which gave so much promise paid this honor to the Heroine of Orleans, who was the incarnation of French patriotism. "May the good and chivalrous child," said the Bishop in concluding, "may Joan of Arc, renewing one of the noblest works of her mortal career, obtain for France holy peace of mind and the union of hearts—for France, which is so gentle when it is united, and so humane when it is peaceful."

The Pope delivered a brief address in Latin, expressing the joy this occasion afforded him. His Holiness said that amidst the difficulties of the present hour, the life of the heroic maiden gave Catholics and lovers of France a lesson in courage and self-sacrifice.

TO JOAN IN HEAVEN

> And all the priests and friars in the realm
> Shall in procession sing her endless praise.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> No longer on St. Denis will we cry,
> But Joan la Pucelle shall be France's saint.
>
> *Shakespeare*, Henry VI., Act I, Scene 6.

The lips that curse to-day the hero's fall
To-morrow vote him laurels and applause;
Impartial Time doth justice unto all,
No blindfold goddess she, of erring laws.
Four hundred years of slander shrink dismayed
Beneath the shrivelling fervor of her glance,
And lo! with praise of thee, O shepherd maid!
Resound the stately sanctuaries of France.

For what is death, that men should fear to lose
The labored drawing of a little breath?
Or what is life, that coward men should choose
Its lease of pain before heroic death?
Thy country grovelled 'neath the tyrant's yoke,
The Vision called, the Heavenly voices spoke,
And pledge to Christ and France thy virgin veins.
'Twas thine to crown with victory her cause.

Yet not in vain
Didst thou the bitter dregs of anguish drain,
And pledge to Christ and France thy virgin veins,
Where now are grasping England's chains?
No smallest link upon thy land remains;
Gone with thy judges and thy murderers,
And *they* were hers.
Yea, many a cause and many a leader since
Have bowed the head to Death, the sov'reign prince.
And where they rose shall others yet arise
And with ephemeral fancies snare men's eyes
And have their little day and pass again.
New hours demand new men,
And wise is he, indeed,
Who sees and shapes new ends to meet new need.
But all shall be as grass of yesterday,
While France is greater far than they;
And France remains and suppliant seeks thine aid
With hands outstretched to thee, O Martyr Maid!

For ancient feuds, old passions and old hates
Watch at her walls and prowl about her gates.
And deadlier foes and subtler shapes of sin
Lurk at her heart and plot her ruin within.
Sons recreant, devising blight and curse,
With wiles insidious would her heart divorce
From all that made her glorious and great
And raised her to her proud estate—
From truth and honor, and her wise belief
In justice, of all virtues chief.
For, walking humbly in the eyes of God,
France aye held Empire's rod;
And kneeling, reverent, at Our Lady's feet
And drawing thence all heavenly virtue sweet,
France aye has been the France of high renown,
Sceptered with love and wearing honor's crown.

From that bright place of glory thou hast won,
Rapt in the vision of the Sire and Son,
In this dark hour that menaces thy land,
Above her hearthstones stretch protecting hand!
'Gainst impious men who forth from school and shrine
Would scourge thy Christ and in the fields of France,
Would raze thy Christ's sweet empery divine,
Oh, gird thee now with new deliverance!

Thy virtues emulating and thy fame
By hearths that burn with Chastity's pure flame,
The maids and matrons of thy land beseech
Thee o'er their homes thy shield of love to reach.
For blest that land and armor'd against ill
Where civic virtues wait on woman's will,
Where reverent manhood worships wife or maid
Queen-like in holy purity arrayed.
She, fenced around by chivalry, perchance
  May suffer, but she cannot suffer long,
  Nor, wronged, be victim of enduring wrong.
    Such happy land is France.

And, lifting high truth's oriflamme, behold
  Her phalanx'd daughters, God-inspired, stand,
As thou 'gainst tyrant England didst of old,
  To drive dishonor from their honored land.
    And, patient long and kindling slow
    To wrath, their hearts for Christ aglow,
About His altars menaced by the law,
At woman's 'hest her sons devoted draw.
While these love virtue, oh, she cannot fall,
Mother of Chivalry, beloved Gaul.

  For not in spoil of sea or soil
    Or ships in ocean waters
  A nation thrives, but in the lives
    Of noble sons and daughters.
  While these shall last, in honor fast,
    The happy land shall flourish.
  Nor foes prevail, but when they fail
    Then laws and peoples perish.

But thou above thine ancient land
Wilt stretch in patronage thy hand.
For howsoe'er disguised in snowy fleece,
Christ's watchdogs lulling into perilous peace,

The wolves of Hell upon Christ's fold would prey,
And shepherds false would lead astray
Christ's lambs in error's devious way,
The heart of France, as in her ardent youth,
Throbs still for Christ and Truth.
And from a thousand Shrines thy people's love
Like incense rises to thy feet above,
Beseeching thee in humblest suppliance
To ward from harm thy France.

Thy country's sin, the insult and the shame,
The scaffold's doom, the faggot and the flame—
All these shall pass and be remembered not;
Fair Charity with kindly tears shall blot
From France's shield the black, corroding stain,
Caught from thy blood, O Lily of Lorraine!
Thy land, so fair, of life shall be bereft
Nor smallest trace be left
To after years to tell
That Freedom once had here her choicest citadel;
The hero's heart shall lose its thirst for fame
And truth be dead and virtue but a name,
Ere men shall cease to honor thee who gave
To France, to Liberty, to Truth—
In battle's bloodiest breaches undismayed,
'Neath insult meek, in persecutions brave—
Thy love, thy life, thy stainless youth,
O Virgin, Patriot and Martyr Maid!

P. J. Coleman.

APPARITION TO
BROTHER ERNEST
CLIFTON, ENGLAND

APPARITION
TO
BROTHER ERNEST
CLIFTON, ENGLAND

1430

each me to weep, sweet Mother-Maid,
As thou didst weep for thy dear Son,
How Christ would love me if I shed
One tear for Him like thine—just one.

Charles H. Towne.

BELLUACENSIS relates that, in a town in England, there was, in the year 1430, a young nobleman called Ernest, who, after having given all his patrimony to the poor, became a monk, and led so perfect a life that the superiors of the monastery had a great esteem for him, particularly on account of his tender devotion to Our Blessed Lady. It happened that the city was attacked by the plague; the Abbot commanded Ernest to go and pray before the altar of Mary, and not to depart from it until the blessed Virgin gave him an answer. After remaining three days before the altar, Mary directed him to say certain prayers; he obeyed, and the plague ceased. But afterwards his devotion to Mary grew cold; the devil assailed him with many temptations, particularly with those against purity, and to fly from the monastery. The miserable young man, in consequence of not recommending himself to Mary, resolved to throw himself from a wall, and so escape from the monastery; but, as he was passing by an image of Mary on the corridor, the Mother of God spoke to him and said: "My son, why do you leave me?" Ernest was filled with astonishment and compunction, and, falling on the ground, said, "But, my Lady, dost thou not see that I can no longer

resist the temptation? Why dost thou not assist me?" The holy Virgin replied, "Why have you not invoked me? Had you recommended yourself to me, you should not be reduced to this unhappy state; from this day forward recommend yourself to me and fear not." Ernest returned to his cell, but the temptations returned; he neglected to recommend himself to God, or to Mary, and therefore he at length fled from the monastery and giving himself up to a most wicked life, rushing from one sin into another, he in the end became an assassin. He took an inn, in which during the night he murdered and robbed the poor travelers who passed by the way, among them a young gentleman who came to the inn. The murderous innkeeper entered during the night, for the purpose of murdering him. But, behold! on the bed he sees not the young man, but Christ Crucified, covered with wounds, who looking at him with eyes full of pity, said: "Is it not enough for you, O ungrateful man! that I have died once for you? Do you wish to kill me a second time? Stretch forth your hand and murder Me again." Ernest was filled with confusion, began to weep, and said with tears: "Lord, here I am; since Thou hast shown me so many mercies, I wish to return to Thee." He then instantly left the inn, in order to return to his monastery, and to do penance for his crimes; but being met on the way by the ministers of justice, he was brought before the judge, and in his presence confessed all the murders he had committed. He was condemned to be hanged, without being even allowed time to go to confession. He then recommended himself to Mary; he was thrown off the scaffold, but the Virgin saved his life; she herself took the halter from his neck, and said to him: "Go back to the monastery, do penance, and when you see in my hands a paper declaring that your sins are pardoned, prepared for death." Ernest returned, and relating to the Abbott all that had happened, performed great penance. After many years, he saw in the hands of Mary a paper assuring him of pardon, he immediately prepared himself for eternity and died a holy death.

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Robert Southey, the (Protestant) poet-laureate of England, in 1819, wrote "A Tale of Paraguay," the fiftieth stanza of Canto II. bearing testimony to the familiar idea and received belief of the Immaculate Conception, although many years before its proclamation as a dogma.

The Indian woman, Monnema, recalling the stories she heard in her youth, describes plainly certain men who had come to the Indian's land, sent by the Great Spirit to do "the Father's work." She says of them:

"They served a maid more beautiful than tongue
Could tell or heart conceive. Of human race,
All heavenly as that Virgin was, she sprung;
But for her beauty and celestial grace,
Being one in whose pure elements no trace
Had e'er inhered of sin or mortal stain,
The highest heaven was now her dwelling place,
There as a queen divine she held her reign,
And there in endless joy forever would remain.
Her feet upon the crescent moon were set,
And moving in their order round her head,
The stars compose her sparkling coronet,
There at her breast the Virgin Mother fed
A Babe Divine, who was to judge the dead;
Such power the spirit gave this awful Child;
Severe He was, and in His anger dread,
Yet always at His Mother's will grew mild,
So well did He obey that Maiden undefiled."

. . . . . .

Sometimes she had descended from above
To visit her true votaries, and requite
Such as had served her well.

Robert Southey.

Hail Mary! The glorious Archangel Gabriel enjoys in Heaven a peculiar distinction for being the first to address this salutation to Our Blessed Lady.—St. Mechtilde.

It is quite a remarkable feature in the history of the Order

of Poor Clares that, in spite of its stringent poverty and rigorous austerities, it has, at all times, been eagerly sought after and embraced by ladies of the highest rank and position in society.

It is surprising to see amongst its members such a vast array of queens and princesses, and other noble dames, who voluntarily exchanged a life of wealth and luxury for one of poverty and penance. Yet while these illustrious personages reflect a certain lustre upon the institute, by reason of the exalted station they occupied in the world, they, themselves, however, will tell you that far from considering themselves as having added anything to the renown of the order, they looked upon it as the highest honor and privilege to have been allowed to join its humble ranks.

And, in fact, we find that such individuals, as a rule, seemed to realize the life of a Poor Clare more than others, and were more conspicuous for their love of poverty, penance and humility.

Another fact worth noticing is this, that the very superiority they enjoyed by nature and education, being ennobled and purified in the school of humility, made them better fitted for the government of religious communities and, in this respect, they contributed largely to the spread and advancement of the order.

The establishment of the Order of Poor Clares in this country is another illustration of the truth of these remarks. Mother Constanzia Bentivoglio, who died January, 1902, and was one of the founders in this country, was of noble family, her father, Count Bentivoglio, having been one of the rescuers of Pope Pius IX. She was also a relative of Pope Leo XIII. She died January, 1902.

APPARITION
TO
ST. VERONICA, V.
MILAN, ITALY
1445

Hear thy children, gentlest Mother,
Prayerful hearts to thee arise;
Hear us while our evening Ave
Soars beyond the starry skies.

Darkling shadows fall around us,
Restful stars their watches keep;
Hush the heart oppressed by sorrow,
Dry the tears of those that weep.

Flora Stanfield.

VERONICA'S parents were peasants of a village near Milan. From her childhood she toiled hard in the house and the field, and accomplished cheerfully every task. Gradually, the desire for perfection grew within her; she became deaf to the jokes and songs of her companions, and sometimes, when reaping and hoeing, would hide her face and weep. Knowing no letters, she began to be anxious about her learning, and rose secretly at night to teach herself to read. Our Blessed Lady told her that other things were necessary, but not this. She showed Veronica three mystical letters, which would teach her more than books. The first signified purity of intention; the second, abhorrence of murmuring or criticism; the third, daily meditation on the Passion. By the first she learned to begin her daily duties for no human motive, but for God alone. By the second, to carry out what she had thus begun by attending to her own affairs, never judging her neighbor, but praying for those who manifestly erred. By the third, she was enabled to forget her own pains and sorrows in those of her Lord, and to weep hourly, but silently, over the memory of His wrongs. She had con-

stant ecstasies, and saw in successive visions the whole life of Jesus, and many other mysteries. Yet by a special grace, neither her raptures nor her tears ever interrupted her labors, which ended only with death. After three years' patient waiting she was received as a lay-sister in the convent of St. Martha, at Milan. The community was extremely poor, and Veronica's duty was to beg through the city for their daily food. Three years after receiving the habit, she was afflicted with constant bodily pains, yet never would consent to be relieved of any of her labors, or to omit one of her prayers. By exact obedience, she became a living copy of the rule, and obeyed with a smile the least hint of her superior. She sought to the last the most hard and humbling occupations, and in their performance enjoyed some of the highest favors ever granted to a Saint. She died in 1497, on the day she had foretold, after a six months' illness, aged fifty-two years, and in the thirtieth of her religious profession.

When Veronica was urged in sickness to accept some exemption from her labors, her answer was: "I must work while I can, while I have time." Dare we, then, waste ours?

The people of Italy come and say their prayers before some picture or image of the Madonna, entering into all their hopes and fears, doubts and anxieties, every detail of their domestic circumstances, quite as naturally as a child confides its little troubles or desires to one of whose sympathy and assistance it has reason to be assured. At one time you may see a poor woman who is going on a journey, or removing from her usual place of residence, come to take leave of her favorite Madonna, and talk to her, and lament over the separation, and in every respect converse with her as though she were her nearest and dearest friend from whom she was about to part; or you may see another go hastily into a church, evidently under the pressure of some sudden trial, throw herself at the feet of the Madonna, and cover them with kisses; then, amid the most convulsive sobs, and with anything but the silent prayer of Anna, in which "only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard at all," tell her the whole history of what has happened, and im-

plore her interference; gradually her agitation subsides; she has communicated her troubles to one who will be sure to help her, and, strengthened by this consolation, she rises from her knees with a calm and cheerful countenance, to go forth to bear them patiently. Yet she can scarcely make up her mind to leave the sanctuary of her peace. As she withdraws with slow and unwilling steps, ever and anon she turns her head to waft another kiss to the Madonna; and you may hear such parting exclamations as these from her lips: "Addio, mamma mia, I have told you everything; I am going away now, and I reckon upon your help; you understand me; I know you'll not disappoint me; addio, mamma mia, addio."

And lest any of my readers should think that this child-like simplicity is confined to the lower and uneducated classes, I cannot resist the temptation of presenting them with one or two extracts from a little book of devotions published some time ago by a distinguished advocate, at that time one of the judges in Naples. This is a specimen of the kind of address which he uses towards the Madonna: "Listen to me, my mother, you must grant me what I have asked for; for if you refuse, what will people say of you? Either that you could not, or that you would not, help me. That you could not, nobody will believe, for they know you too well for that; and then, that you would not—I protest I would rather be told that you had not the power than that you had not the will; for what! shall it be said that my own mother, the mother of mercy, grace, and kindness, had not the will to relieve the necessity of one of her children? Oh, what then will become of her reputation? Think of this, my mother, and extricate yourself from the dilemma if you can." And again: "You think, perhaps, my mother, that you have given me a great deal already. I do not deny it; but you owe me still more than you have given me. Everyone knows that your riches are inexhaustible; that you are the Queen of heaven and earth, the dispenser of grace and the gifts of God. But then consider, I pray of you, that those riches were given you, not for yourself alone but for your children: for me, the last and most unworthy of them all! Was

it not to redeem us that the Son of God became man, and chose you for His Mother? Behold, then, all that you have is ours; it was given you for us; it belongs to us. Now you cannot deny that all that you have yet given me is as nothing compared with what you possess. You are therefore my debtor, and you owe me much. Is it not so? What answer have you to make to this?

AVE MARIA

Ave Maria! o'er the earth and sea,
That heavenliest hour of heaven is worthiest thee!
  Ave Maria! blessed be the hour
The time, the clime, the spot, where I so oft
  Have felt that moment in its fullest power
Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft
  While swung the deep bell in the distant tower,
Or the faint dying day hymn stole aloft,
And not a breath crept through the rosy air,
And yet the forest leaves seem'd stirr'd with prayer.

Ave Maria! 'tis the hour of prayer;
  Ave Maria! 'tis the hour of love;
Ave Maria! may our spirits dare
  Look up to thine and to thy Son's above.
Ave Maria! oh, that face so fair,
  Those downcast eyes beneath the Almighty Dove!

Lord Byron.

APPARITION
TO
ST. CATHERINE OF BOLOGNA
BOLOGNA, ITALY
1460

O wondrous depth of grace Divine
That He should bend so low!
And Mary, oh, what joy 'twas thine,
In His dear love to know.

Joy to be Mother of the Lord,
And thine the truer bliss,
In every thought, and deed, and word,
To be forever His.

Henry W. Baker.

CATHERINE, the daughter of a noble Italian family, was placed when only eleven at the court of Margaret, Princess d'Este, at Ferrara. She soon wearied of the splendors around her, and retired at the age of fourteen to serve God in religion. After some years she made her profession as a daughter of St. Clare, and was sent to found a convent of the Order of Bologna. She was tried by many false apparitions and terrible temptations, but she overcame them all, by persevering obedience, and God made known to her the illusions of the devil, and consoled her by heavenly visions. She gained from these trials a salutary fear of the majesty of God. A deep conviction of her own nothingness made her court contempt and seek the most painful occupations in the convent. She considered herself the cause of all the sins of her neighbors. This humility drew Jesus into her soul, to enkindle therein the consuming fire of love. She had a great devotion to St. Thomas of Canterbury, who appeared to her. She saw also in vision other Saints, with Our Blessed Lady, and our Lord Himself, who bade her mark the words they were singing, *"Et gloria ejus in te videbitur."* This prophecy was verified in the extraordinary preservation

of her body, which remains incorrupt to this day, sitting in her habit, and miraculously supported. Her holy death took place in 1463.

On Christmas eve, 1460, Catherine passed the night in church. She recited one thousand "Hail Marys," with great fervor in honor of the Mother of God. In reward of her humble adoration of His Incarnation, Jesus appeared to her at midnight in His Mother's arms. This kind Mother gave her Divine Child to Catherine and allowed her to caress Him. Although her heart was overflowing with the joy of that hour, Catherine spoke not of her vision, until her secret was betrayed to her sisters, by the brilliant color of that spot upon her pale face where she had received the kiss of the Divine Infant, a spot marked now, after a lapse of 400 years, by the brighter tint of her incorrupt flesh.

"O consciousness of my nothingness, how great is your force! it is you that have unbarred all the gates of my soul, and given entrance to Him who is infinite."—St. Catherine of Bologna.

"Adore ye Him that made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of waters."—Apoc., xiv, 7.

The soul of man is endowed with many noble powers, and feels a keen joy in their exercise; but the keenest joy we are capable of feeling, consists in prostrating all our powers of mind and heart, in humblest adoration before the majesty of God.

THE HOLY FAMILY

O Child of beauty rare—
O Mother chaste and fair—
How happy seemed they both, so far beyond compare!
She in her Infant blest,
And he in conscious rest;
Nestling within the soft, warm cradle of her breast!
What joy that sight might bear
To him who sees them there,
If, with a pure and quiet untroubled eye
He looked upon the twain, like Joseph standing by.

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe.

APPARITION
TO
B. STEPHANA QUINZANI, V.O.S.D.
BRESCIA, ITALY
1464

"All in stoles of snowy brightness
Unto thee the Angels sing,
Unto thee the Virgin Choirs,
Mother of th' Eternal King.
Joyful in thy path they scatter
Roses white and lilies fair,
Yet with thy chaste bosom's whiteness
Rose nor lily may compare."

Off. Purity of B. V. M.

STEPHANA QUINZANI was born A.D. 1457, near Brescia in Italy. Her parents were of the middle class in life and were both of them fervent in the practice of their religious duties. From her earliest childhood Stephana continually heard an interior voice repeating to her the words: "Charity, charity, charity!" When only five years old she consecrated herself to God with her whole heart, and at the age of seven she made the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, adding a promise to assume later on the habit of the Third Order of St. Dominic, to which her father belonged. Our Lord then appeared to her, accompanied by His Blessed Mother, St. Dominic, St. Thomas Aquinas, and St. Catherine of Siena, and espoused her to Himself, bestowing on her a magnificent ring, which was seen by many persons.

About the same time, her family removed to Soncino, and Stephana placed herself under the spiritual direction of blessed Matthew Carreri of the Order of St. Dominic, who one day told her that at his death he should make her his heiress. The child did not then understand the meaning of these words, but, when the servant of God departed this life, she felt her heart

painfully and mysteriously wounded, and at the same time blessed Matthew appeared to her and explained that this was the inheritance he had promised her.

When about twelve years old, she went to hear a sermon on the Feast of St. Andrew. That great Apostle appeared to her in vision, holding in his hands a large cross, and addressed her in the following words: "Behold, my daughter, the way to heaven. Love God, fear God, honor God; flee from the world and embrace the Cross." Love of the Cross became thenceforth her characteristic virtue, so that it was said of her that there were but two things for which she had an affection, namely, Holy Communion and sufferings. In all her visions the Cross bore a remarkable part, and she gave herself up, not only to the practice of the severest austerities, but to an almost uninterrupted meditation on the Passion of her Divine Spouse. She was even permitted in some degree to undergo His sufferings in her own person, participating on Fridays in a mysterious manner in Our Lord's agony and sweat of blood, His scourging at the pillar, His crowning with thorns, and His crucifixion. Her confessor, who wrote her life, testified to having seen the sacred Stigmata on her hands and feet, and the marks of the crown of thorns upon her head.

In one of her raptures she was given to understand that all the angels and Saints together, including even Our Blessed Lady herself, are unable to love God as much as He deserves to be loved. Then an abyss of love opened before her eyes, and she cried out: "O my Lord and Redeemer, grant me the grace to love all this love; otherwise I care not to live." But our Lord smiled upon her and told her that her wish was an impossible one, as her finite will could not embrace that abyss of infinite love. Nevertheless, to comfort her, He said that He would accept her good will, as though she really loved to the extent to which she desired, adding: "Think not that this great abyss of love remains unloved; for, if creatures cannot love it, it is loved by Me, who am Infinite good."

When, for the love of God, blessed Stephana had made an entire renunciation of her own will in the hands of her con-

fessōr, Our Lord appeared to her and said: "My daughter, since for the love of Me thou hast generously stripped thyself of thine own will, ask what thou wilt and I will grant it to thee." The holy Virgin replied almost in the words used by St. Thomas Aquinas under similar circumstances: "I desire nothing but Thyself, O Lord."

At the age of fifteen Stephana received the habit of the Third Order of St. Dominic, from which time she devoted herself to the care of the sick and poor in the hospitals, and to every kind of active charity. Our Lord was pleased to work miracles by her hands, multiplying food and money and restoring the sick to health. Her reputation for sanctity extended far and wide. The Republic of Venice and the Duke of Mantua pressed her to come and found convents in their territories; but she refused, in the hope of being able to establish one in Sancino. This she was at length able to accomplish, placing it under the invocation of St. Paul the Apostle and peopling it with a fervent community of thirty, whom she had carefully trained to the practices of the religious life. In consequence of the war between France and Venice, the nuns were obliged, after a time, to withdraw from their convent and take shelter within the walls of the town.

It was during this interval that blessed Stephana passed to her reward on 2nd January, A.D. 1530, at the age of seventy-three. She was laid to rest in the church attached to her convent, to which her community was afterwards able to return. It is, however, now suppressed, but blessed Stephana is still held in great veneration by the people of Soncino. She was beatified by Benedict XIV. in the year 1740.

In the life of Blessed Stephana, a Dominican nun, mention is made of a sister named Paula, who died at the convent of Mantua, after a long life of eminent virtue. The body was carried to the church and placed uncovered in the choir among the religious. During the recitation of the Office, blessed Stephana knelt near the bier, recommending to God the deceased religious, who had been very dear to her. Suddenly the latter let fall the crucifix, which had been placed between

her hands, extended the left arm, seized the right hand of blessed Stephana, and pressed it tightly, as a poor patient in the burning heat of a fever would ask the assistance of a friend. She held it for a considerable time, and then, withdrawing her arm, sank back lifeless in the coffin. The religious, astonished at this prodigy, asked an explanation of the blessed Sister. She replied that, whilst the deceased pressed her hand, an inarticulate voice had spoken in the depths of her heart, saying: "Help me, dear sister, help me in the frightful torture which I endure. O! if you knew the severity of the Judge who desires all our love, what atonement He demands for the least faults before admitting us to the reward! If you knew how pure we must be to see the face of God! Pray! pray, and do penance for me, who can no longer help myself."

Blessed Stephana touched by the prayer of her friend, imposed upon herself all kinds of penances and good works, until she learned, by a new revelation, that Sister Paula was delivered from her sufferings, and had entered into eternal glory.

Copied from the Dogma of Purgatory by Rev. F. X. Schouppe, S.J.

FOR MY LADY'S DAY

Beneath no ivied tower I stand,
With song on lip and lute in hand
To greet my Lady's day.
No fickle hand opes lattice pane
To wave in love—mayhaps, disdain,
At me, her knight so gay.

Apart from city's crowded street,
Where're pain and pleasure voiceless meet,
I find my Lady's throne.
Expectant are her eyes for mine,
Her yearning arms would me entwine
And claim me all her own.

She leans adown most lovingly
To hear my heart make melody
In sweet yet wordless song,

What words my Lady's love can tell!
She reads my tangled heart songs well
  My heart hath been hers long.

My Lady dwelt far o'er the sea
In times agone in Galilee
  Where roller-birds flash bright.
But now—deep mystery of love,
Though Queen of royal courts above,
  She's near me day and night.

I trow you know this Lady mine,
Not mine alone, but also thine,
  Is Lady Mary fair.
What birthday gift for Mary blest?
A blameless life she prizeth best,
  And simple child-like prayer.

Rev. W. F. Ennis, S. J.

THE PREFACE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

This is called the Miraculous Preface; for, as the story goes, the greater part was miraculously put in the mouth of Pope Urban II. as he was one day singing High Mass in the Church of Our Blessed Lady at Placentia. He began by chanting the Common Preface, but when he had come to that part where the Prefaces generally turn off to suit the occasion he heard angels above him singing as follows: "Who, by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, conceived thine Only-Begotten Son, and, the glory of her virginity still remaining intact, brought into the world the Eternal Light, Christ Jesus, our Lord." The holy Pontiff caused these words to be afterwards inserted in the Common Preface at the council held in the above place in 1095, and, for this reason the Preface of the Blessed Virgin is ascribed to him.—Father O'Brien's History of the Mass.

SHRINE OF
OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNCIL
GENAZZANO, ITALY

SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNCIL
GENAZZANO, ITALY

1467

Sweet Lady of Good Counsel,
Oh list with tender heart,
To all the tales of misery
Which from our lips depart;
And bid us hope with fondest love,
That Heaven be our home above.

Rev. J. A. White.

THE great sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Counsel is her church bearing that title at Genazzano, a small town about twenty-four miles southeast of Rome. In pagan times Genazzano was the scene of the revolting rites connected with the worship of Venus. When Christianity took root there a church was built under the auspices of Pope St. Mark (A.D. 336-352), and was one of the earliest known to have been dedicated to Our Lady. This church bore the title of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel. It stood near the ruins of the temples and statues of Venus—a memorial of the triumph of purity over sensuality. The 25th of April each year—a day set apart for heathen games and sacrifices—became in Christian times the festival of Our Lady of Good Counsel (it has since been changed to the 26th) and was celebrated by the people of the neighborhood with every sign of rejoicing. Thus for centuries was Our Blessed Lady honored under this special title on the mountain which bore, half-way up its ascent, the little town of Genazzano.

The place, however, was destined to become the seat of a more widespread devotion. At Scutari, in Albania, in the

humble little Church of the Annunciation, there was in the fifteenth century an ancient picture of the Virgin Mother, said to have been miraculously conveyed thither from the East. When the Turks threatened to overrun the adjacent country this picture was removed from its position by invisible hands, and borne southward toward Rome, enveloped in a white cloud, which floated quickly through the air.

On April 25, 1467, which happened to be a Sunday, a large crowd of people had assembled at Genazzano for the patronal festival, when, in the sight of all, a white cloud, floating through the heavens, descended toward the ancient church of Our Lady, and remained stationary near the rough wall of one of the chapels, which was undergoing enlargement and was still unfinished. At the same time all heard wonderful music in the air as the cloud descended; and, to the astonishment of the multitude, the bells of Our Lady's church, untouched by human hands, broke forth into a peal of welcome, to be answered in the same marvelous way from the bell towers of all the other churches of the town. As the cloud cleared away it was discovered that a picture of the Madonna was stationary by the rough wall toward which the cloud had moved, where it remained, upheld, as it seemed, by angel hands. The picture, which to the delighted people appeared to have come from Heaven, was hailed with acclamation as the "Madonna of Paradise." A few days after its arrival it was identified as the ancient fresco from the Church of the Annunciation at Scutari, by two men who had witnessed its removal from that place, and had followed its course.

The Church of Our Lady of Good Counsel at Genazzano, then served by the Hermits of St. Augustine, had fallen into a state of great dilapidation. A devout Augustinian Tertiary, known in after years as the Blessed Petruccia, had given all her substance toward its restoration, hoping by her example to stir up the zeal of her fellow-townsfolk. She had begun by enlarging the Chapel of St. Blaise, on the north side of the church, but the funds at her disposal would suffice to accomplish only a very small portion of the work; and as no one else came to

the rescue, the restoration stopped, amidst the jeers of those who had tried to dissuade the holy widow from her project. She, however, was full of confidence in the help of the Madonna. Though eighty years of age, she hoped to see the completion of her work, and her confidence was rewarded.

The miraculous advent of the picture stirred up the enthusiasm of the country, and the church was thoroughly restored; the Chapel of St. Blaise, where the blessed picture had rested, becoming a rich and beautiful shrine for the Madonna in the lifetime of the holy woman who had begun its restoration, and who was laid to rest at the foot of its altar. From the ancient church which it had made its resting-place, the miraculous picture came to be called by the title of Our Lady of Good Counsel. Since the time of its coming the picture has remained in its first position near the wall of St. Blaise's Chapel, unsupported in any way, as many eye-witnesses have testified. Although the main church has been twice rebuilt, the shell of the chapel remains as it was in the fifteenth century.

The Shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel during the four centuries of its new life has grown into one of the most favored in Italy—the scene of many miracles, and the resort of countless pilgrimages. The little chapel of Blessed Petruccia has been adorned with priceless gifts from the great ones of the earth, anxious to show devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.

The loving devotion of Pope Leo XIII. to the Mother of God has been shown in various ways throughout his pontificate, one of the most recent proofs of which is the grant to the Hermits of St. Augustine of the faculty to bless and impose upon the faithful the Scapular of Our Lady of Good Counsel. Moved by the growing need of Our Blessed Lady's special help and protection under the difficulties which oppose the faithful practice of the Catholic religion in our age, these good religious suggested a new method of propagating the devotion amongst the faithful. Our Lady's title of Madonna of Good Counsel seemed to speak of the special need of these days—the gift of Counsel. In so many nations claiming to be Christian educa-

tion has been divorced from religion; the training of the young has been taken from the Church and given to her enemies; and by these means everything good and holy has been brought to contempt. God and His Saints have been driven from the schools, and everything pious and devout has been held up to ridicule. Nothing has been neglected by which faith may be weakened and eventually destroyed. The Virgin Mother of Good Counsel must needs be invoked to put an end to these evils, and to make Catholic principles flourish as of old.

With this end in view, these pious religious petitioned the Holy Father to deign to grant faculties to their Order to institute a scapular to be worn by the faithful, and thus to afford an easy and popular method of spreading the devotion more widely. It was already well known that Leo XIII. had shown, even when a young ecclesiastic, a special love for the devotion. When he became Pope he followed the examples of many of his predecessors in enrolling himself in the Pious Union; and the picture of Our Lady of Good Counsel in the Pauline Chapel—a beautiful copy of the miraculous picture enthroned over the altar there by Pius IX.—had often been the object of his long and ardent prayers. A small copy of the picture, moreover, was always on his writing-table. The Holy Father, therefore, as had been expected, was full of sympathy with the project. He himself suggested the design for the Scapular. One portion was to bear a copy of the miraculous picture, with the title beneath, *Mater Boni Consilii;* the other the Papal Tiara and cross keys; and underneath the adaptation from Scripture, which the Holy Father had long before written, with his own hand, under one of the copies of the famous Madonna: *Fili acquiesce consiliis ejus,*—"My son, hearken to her counsels."

After the decree had been issued by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, and the Scapular thus formally approved of by the Holy See, the Holy Father gave a further proof of his devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel by declaring his resolution of being the first to receive and wear the new Scapular. Accordingly, the Pontifical sacristan, the Rt. Rev. Bishop Piffari,

the confessor of His Holiness, invested the Vicar of Christ—humbly kneeling to receive it like one of the simple faithful—with the Scapular of Good Counsel.

Since then many thousands of Christians have hastened to enroll themselves amongst the clients of Our Lady of Good Counsel; for the Holy Father, not content with the sympathy and encouragement he had already given to the work, would also attract the faithful by the promise of special rewards. Accordingly, the treasury of the Church was opened in an unusually liberal way. Besides a plenary indulgence on the day of admission (which may be gained, if preferred, on the Sunday or some feast immediately following), and on the 26th of April, or within the octave, plenary indulgences are also granted for the Feasts of the Immaculate Conception, Nativity, Annunciation, Purification, and Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, the Feast of St. Augustine, and *in articulo mortis*. To gain these, confession and Communion are required. Partial indulgences of seven years and seven Lents may be gained on the Feasts of the Presentation and Visitation of Our Lady, without approaching the Sacraments, by visiting a church and praying for the intentions of the Pope. But the special favors granted are those of an indulgence of one hundred days every time Our Lady of Good Counsel is invoked, either vocally or mentally; and a like indulgence of one hundred days for every good work done with a contrite heart for the conversion of sinners.

When we reflect that these partial indulgences may be gained every day, times without number, we can realize how highly the Pope has favored this new Scapular; and consequently how earnestly he desires the faithful to make use of this easy means of honoring the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, and of obtaining her special help in these troubled times.

Dom. Michael Barrett, O. S. D.

OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL

Over the sea from Scutari
To Genazzano quaint and fair,
In the mystic glow of the long ago,
Floated a picture through the air.

A picture old, worth a rim of gold,
Where the rarest skill of the Byzantine,
Had softly limned, on a fresco dim,
The Virgin Queen, and the Babe Divine.

His blessed face in her close embrace,
She held the Infant, firm and fast,
And fair to trace in their tender grace,
The arms of the Child were round her cast:

While pure and pale, from her fringed veil
The lily-face of the Mother shone,
The yellow light of His halo bright,
Melting and mixing with His own.

Over the sea from Scutari,
In April dusk, in April dawn;
Through sunset hues and morning dews,
A drifting star when stars were none,

By viewless hands of Angel bands
Borne safe to Genazzano fair,
Over the sea from Scutari,
Floated the fresco through the air.

The night was chill,—the streets were still,
The picture passed through the little town,
At twilight fall o'er the broken wall
Of an ancient chapel settling down;

And there in the dawn of the April morn,
The wondering people saw it shine,
Suspended low o'er a wall of snow,
With no support save the Hand Divine!

Pure and bright as the orient light
The Maiden-Mother and her Child,
Mysterious borne to that spot folorn,
Over the ancient ruin smiled;

The ruddy flame of the sunlight came
To wrap the Fresco round and round.
"A miracle! A miracle!"
The people cried as they kissed the ground.

And there they knelt, and there they prayed
Around the Lady of the Air;
And day by day in a magic way,
A shrine majestic, builded there;

Where high in space, o'er the Altar-place,
Its wondrous wanderings safely ended,
Serene and fair, in the upper air
The shining picture hung suspended.

The curious hand might pass a wand
On every side, above, below:
All unsustained, on its height remained,
The Image none might name or know;

Till a stranger-priest from the golden East
Told of a fresco fair to see
Which drifted away one April day
From the walls of a church in Scutari.

A star of peace on darkening seas
Where storm-tossed ships were blindly sailing,
A light to shoals of exiled souls,
A pilgrim patroness unfailing,

Behold they named her as she sat,
Her Babe upon her breast of snow—
The Guardian sweet of wandering feet,
Madre del Buon Consiglio!

O Maid divine! in far off shrine
Beyond the purple, rolling sea,
In all our wanderings far and wide
Our Mother of Good Counsel be!

In all our fears, our doubts, our tears,
  Our nights of sleepless bitterness,
Be thou the star that shines afar,
  To gild the clouds of dark distress.

And o'er the sea, O love! to thee
  Our pilgrim hearts shall gladly go,
And grateful share thy tender care,
  Madre del Buon Consiglio!

Eleanor C. Donnelly.

APPARITION
TO
B. LUCY OF NARNI, O.S.D.
NARNI, ITALY
1483

When doubt and fear my soul assail,
And Faith can see no light,
When the dread monarch shall unveil
His terrors to my sight,
O Virgin Mother! from above,
In that last hour of doom,
Then bear me in thine arms of love
Beyond earth's mist and gloom.

Henry Coyle.

LESSED LUCY was born at Narni, in Italy, on the 15th of November, 1476, of the noble family of the Broccolelli. When she was a little child, one of her uncles brought some toys and pious objects from Rome as presents to his nephews and nieces. Lucy immediately made choice of a rosary and a little statue of the Infant Jesus as her share of the gifts; and this "Christarello," as she called it, became the cherished object of her devotion. Going one day, when she was seven years old, to visit another uncle, in whose house she remembered to have seen a room, on the ceiling of which was a painting representing the holy angels, she wanted to see the picture once more. She was unwilling to have any companion who might disturb her devotions, and yet the staircase which led to the room was too steep and difficult for her to climb alone. She therefore had recourse, as usual, to the Infant Jesus, and found herself miraculously taken to the room in question. Whilst praying there, she was favored with a heavenly vision of Our Divine Lord, accompanied by His Blessed Mother, St. Dominic, St. Catherine of Siena, and a glorious troop of angels and Saints. Jesus then

espoused her to Himself, placing a precious ring on her finger; and St. Dominic and St. Catharine took her under their special protection, the former bestowing upon her the Scapular of his Order, which she continued to wear under her secular attire until she was able to assume it in public. Many other heavenly favors, together with the gift of prophecy, were granted to her during her childhood; and she was thrice miraculously restored to health by St. Catharine of Siena, and St. Peter Martyr.

As she grew older her family sought to give her in marriage, but Lucy firmly and courageously resisted; until at length Our Blessed Lady revealed to her that it was the will of God that she should accept the hand of a certain Count Pietro, and that her married life was to be an imitation of the holiness and purity of the holy house of Nazareth. Though she then had the management of a large household, which is said to have been as devout and well-ordered as a religious community, blessed Lucy relaxed nothing of her customary exercises of prayer and practised heroic penance, daily receiving the discipline at the hands of one of her maids. Prompted by a spirit of humility, she would dress herself in coarse and shabby clothes and, during several hours every day take part with her servants in the domestic work of the house, after which she resumed the rich attire suitable to her rank.

After four years of married life, blessed Lucy resolved, in obedience to the express command of Heaven, to leave her husband and carry out her early desires of consecrating herself entirely to her Heavenly Spouse. She retired for a time to her mother's house, where the Prior of the Dominican Convent of Narni gave her the habit of the Third Order in the presence of witnesses, and a week later received her to profession. She then proceeded to Rome, where her uncles procured her admission into a convent dedicated to St. Catherine of Siena, in which she spent nearly a year. After that, she was sent to found a Convent of the Order at Viterbo; and three years later, when she was twenty-three years of age, at the earnest request of Duke Hercules d'Este, the Pope commanded her to go to

Ferrara and establish a convent in that city, of which she was appointed perpetual prioress. During that time she suffered much from the Count, her husband; but she at length succeeded in inducing him to take the habit of St. Francis, in which he lived and died holily.

Amongst many other miraculous visions and favors, blessed Lucy was visibly marked with the Sacred Stigmata. She was held in great esteem for her sanctity and miracles, and for her spirit of prophecy. But Our Blessed Lord loved His faithful spouse too well to leave her without a large share in His own chalice of suffering. Accordingly, after the death of her patron, the Duke of Ferrara, some members of the Community whom she had occasion to reprove for their evil lives, conspired against her, and by their calumnies, which were believed by the superiors of the Order and by the Sovereign Pontiff himself, procured her deposition from office. She was made to take the lowest place, deprived of any voice in the affairs of the convent she had founded, forbidden to go out of the house or to speak with seculars, or even to her confessor, in whose place another confessor was assigned her who was prejudiced against her. For the remaining thirty-eight years of her life blessed Lucy thus remained beneath the shadow of the Cross, often afflicted also in body by serious illness in which she received no assistance from the Community, who had allowed themselves to be so strangely blinded to her true character. But Our Blessed Lord sent His Saints to visit and console her from Heaven and, on one occasion miraculously transported blessed Catherine of Raconigi, who was then living, from her home in Savoy, to spend the night in the cell of blessed Lucy, whom she had ardently desired to see.

The end came at last on the 15th of November, A. D. 1544. Having received the Last Sacraments and, with the joyful cry on her lips, "Away, away to Heaven!" she happily departed to her Spouse, whilst angelic melodies floated in the air around. Then the eyes of her sisters were opened, and they buried her with great honor. Many miracles followed after her death, and she was beatified by Benedict XIII.

THE STABAT MATER OF THE CRIB

Stabat Mater speciosa juxtum fenum gaudiosa, Dum jacebat parvulus.

Stands the Mother more than beauteous
Where her blessed Christ is laid;
In the stable by the manger,
Stands the loving Mother-maid.

How her virgin soul is thrilling,
Thrilling with unearthly bliss!
She hath seen Him, she hath heard Him,
She hath felt His Infant kiss!

For our sins and for His nation
He, the little Jesus lies,
In the stable with the oxen,
Tears are in His infant eyes.

Nato Christo in præsepe,
So the white winged angels sing,
Coming down from highest heaven
Praises to the Crib to bring.

Stands the holy peaceful Joseph,
With the spotless Virgin flower,
Speechless in their holy rapture—
Speechless at that midnight hour.

Make me feel the pain He suffers,
From the cradle to the grave
Who in that poor stable lying,
Comes from heaven my soul to save.

Bind me close and ever closer,
To that Babe of Bethlehem,
To the gentle Jesulino,
Love must find new names for Him.

And when dying, let me see Him,
Let me clasp Him to my breast;
Loving, living, dying,
Let me go to endless rest.

Annie R. Bennett, née Gladstone.

APPARITION
OF
OUR LADY OF THE GOLDEN SHEAF
AMMERSCHWIHR, FRANCE

1491

Ave Maria! 'tis the evening hymn,
Of many pilgrims on the land and sea;
Soon as the day withdraws, and two or three
Faint stars are urning, all whose eyes are dim
With tears or watching, all of weary limb;
Or troubled spirit yield the bended knee,
And find, O Virgin life, repose in thee.

T. W. Parsons.

FAR off beyond "the blue Alsacian mountains," in the former department of the Haut-Rhin, where the dark ridges of the Vosges Montagnes look down on the smiling plains of our ever-loved and mourned Alsace, lies the quiet village of Ammerschwihr. It is half hidden on the wooded hillside, unknown to the ordinary traveler, loved by all the country round for Mary's Shrine. This venerable French sanctuary is now all the more revered, as it seems that, despite the right of conquest, the hallowed spot must still remain *la terre de France.* French, in truth, have ever been the hearts of those who pour forth their fervent prayers at the Shrine situated on the very limits of the two rival nations—on the long boundary line, where the slender stakes, placed at intervals all along the frontier, alone mark the separation of the fair land of France—*Regnum Mariæ*—from the territory of her conqueror.

Very simple, but charming in its poetry and simplicity, is the legend attached to this old sanctuary. In 1491 a country laborer was bitten by a serpent, as he passed along a path on the hillside, returning from his day's mowing. He died from the effects of the bite; and his pious widow placed a statue of

Our Lady of Compassion in the trunk of the oak tree near which her husband had met with the accident, together with an appeal to passing travelers to pray, on that spot, for the repose of his soul.

A short time after, on the 14th of September of the same year, a blacksmith, named Thierry Schoere, on his way to the neighboring town of Morschwihr, stopped to pray before the statue. Scarce had he begun his devotions when Mary, in all her heavenly glory, appeared to him. She said: "My son, the people of the country around have aroused the anger of God by their sins; and if they do not repent, many scourges will come upon them. The ice you see in my hand is an image of the hail ready to fall in all seasons, and destroy the harvests; whereas the stalk of corn, with its three ears, which I carry in the other hand, shows the time of fertility, and the blessings ready to be showered on the country if the people repent. Rise, go to Morschwihr, and tell the people what you have seen and heard." "But, Lady," said Schoere, "no one will believe me." "Nearly all will believe you," answered the celestial visitor, as she disappeared.

The blacksmith felt both deeply touched and greatly troubled —wishing to obey the Queen of Heaven, and dreading the ridicule of the people. He went to the town, and there fear triumphed. His purchase of wheat being completed, he was about to return home, without having spoken of the celestial Apparition, when, to his astonishment, he found it utterly impossible to lift his bags of grain. Despite all his efforts, and those of the friendly neighbors who hastened to assist him, the bags remained hopelessly fixed to the ground. Understanding the wonder as a merciful warning, Schoere hastened to relate the vision. The priests and magistrates believed him; the people did penance; and, in remembrance of the heavenly admonition, a chapel was erected on the hillside and dedicated to Our Lady of the Golden Sheaf. It became a popular sanctuary, and was favored some years later by a great miracle.

One morning a wretched man received Holy Communion in the chapel, for the sole purpose of profaning the Sacred Host.

Scarcely had he received the Bread of Life when he left the chapel, and threw the Host into the grass outside. Instantly a stalk of wheat, bearing three ears, sprang up, and the Sacred Host settled on the miraculous stem. A swarm of bees flew to the spot, and wove a beautiful network around the Host, thus forming a waxen ostensorium; while angel voices filled the air, entrancing those who witnessed the prodigy. The Father guardian of the sanctuary, having been summoned, carried the Sacred Host to Its resting-place in the tabernacle.

The pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of the Golden Sheaf became one of the most celebrated in Alsace. In 1636 the passage of the Swedes arrested her triumphs for a time. The cruel invaders burned her sanctuary; but, strange to say, Mary's statues—one an earthen image, the other carved in wood—were found, later on, beneath the ruins, both uninjured in the least. The earthen statue was the original image placed in the oak by the pious widow, and still exists in the chapel built in 1656 by Monsieur du Lys, a canon of St. Dié, who belonged to the family of the Venerable Jéhanne de Lorraine.

Owing to the efforts of this holy priest, the Alsacian pilgrimage was happily revived. After his death the Capuchins of Colmar took charge of the sanctuary till the Revolution. Then the two statues were transferred, for greater security, to the parish church; and the inhabitants of Ammerschwihr bought the chapel, thus preserving it from destruction. In 1804 pious pilgrims sought out the venerated Shrine, and soon Our Lady of the Golden Sheaf beheld her children at her feet once more. Since 1842 the sanctuary has been cared for by missionaries, and each year at least 30,000 pilgrims visit the Shrine.

May Our Lady of the Golden Sheaf hear the fervent prayers offered by so many devoted hearts among the children of her own favored nation! May their loving hopes be one day realized; and may her faithful clients, in the near future, surround their Mother's Shrine in their own country, and no longer be obliged to seek it in a stranger's land.

"VICTIMAE PASCHALI"

(Selected for the New York *Times* by Archbishop Martinelli, as the best Easter verse in the Roman Catholic Ritual.)

Forth to the paschal Victim, Christians, bring
Your sacrifice of praise:
The Lamb redeems the sheep:
  And Christ, the sinless One,
  Hath to the Father sinners reconciled.
Together, Death and Life
  In the strange conflict strove;
  The Prince of Life, Who died,
  Now lives and reigns.
What thou sawest, Mary, say,
  As thou wentest on the way.

I saw the tomb wherein the Living One had lain;
I saw his glory as He rose again;
Napkin and linen cloths, and angels twain:
  Yea, Christ is risen, my hope, and He
  Will go before you into Galilee.
We know that Christ indeed has risen from the grave:
Hail, thou King of Victory!
Have mercy, Lord, and save.

Cardinal Martinelli.

MEMORARE OR PRAYER OF ST. BERNARD

Remember, O most loving Virgin Mary, that it is a thing unheard of that anyone ever had recourse to thy protection, implored thy help, and sought thy intercession, and was left forsaken. Filled, therefore, with confidence in thy goodness, I fly to thee, O Mother, Virgin of virgins; to thee I come, before thee I stand, a sorrowful sinner. Despise not my words, O Mother of the Word; but graciously hear and grant my prayer. Amen.

300 *days. Plenary once a month.*

APPARITION

TO

B. CATHARINE OF RACONIGI, V.O.S.D.

RACONIGI, ITALY

1500

As kneeling day by day
We to our Father duteous pray,
So unforbidden we may speak,
An Ave to Christ's Mother meek.

John Keble.

BLESSED Catharine was born at Raconigi in Piedmont, Italy, A. D. 1486. The place of her birth was an old half-ruined hut, exposed to all the inclemency of the weather, for her parents had been reduced to extreme poverty in consequence of the war then raging between the Duke of Savoy and the Marquis of Saluzzo. The child had to suffer many hardships from her infancy, but she bore all with patience, and even in those tender years was honored with many wonderful tokens of the Divine favor. One day she broke a cup which her mother greatly valued, and, as she was weeping inconsolably in fear of being punished, a beautiful child suddenly appeared in the room, picked up the broken pieces, and restored the cup to her whole and entire, and then vanished from her sight. At the age of five, Our Blessed Lady mystically espoused her to the Infant Jesus, in presence of many angels and Saints, and in particular of St. Jerome, St. Peter Martyr, and St. Catharine of Siena. On that occasion Our Divine Lord gave these three Saints to her as her special patrons and protectors, and also commanded a seraph to watch over her for the remainder of her life, in addition to the angel who had guarded her from her birth. Her heavenly espousals with the Beloved of her soul were renewed on two subsequent occasions with circumstances of great solemnity.

When she was fourteen, as she was praying earnestly before

daybreak on the Feast of St. Stephen, and telling that glorious Protomartyr that the Apostles had especially given women into his keeping, and that therefore she hoped he would take her under his protection and help her to preserve her virginity, he appeared to her, bidding her be of good courage, for her prayer was heard, and she should presently be filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Then three rays of light descended upon her, and she heard a voice saying: "I am come to dwell with thee, and to purge, illuminate, enkindle, and animate thy soul." Nor was this the only time on which she visibly received the Holy Ghost. He had come upon her in the form of a dove when she was only five years old; and He came on two later occasions, once as a shining cloud, and again under the form of tongues of fire.

One Christmas night, as she was meditating on the birth of the Divine Infant, the seraph who had been given as her guardian transported her to Bethlehem, where she beheld the Holy Child in vision, and was permitted to take Him into her arms and caress Him. Several times her Divine Spouse took her heart out of her body to cleanse and beautify it, as He had done to her patroness, St. Catharine of Siena. Indeed, the tokens of Divine favor granted to her bore a strong resemblance to those bestowed on the seraphic Saint of Siena, and the whole character of the sanctity of both was, so to speak, cast in the same mould.

Like St. Catharine, she became a member of the Third Order of St. Dominic, still continuing to live amongst seculars; like her, too, she received the impression of the sacred Stigmata, which, by her own request, were invisible to the eyes of others. She was permitted to share in the sufferings caused to her Divine Spouse by His crown of thorns; she often received Holy Communion in a miraculous manner; and, like St. Thomas Aquinas, she was girded by the hands of angels. The words, "*Jesu, spes mea*," "Jesus, my hope," were several times inscribed in letters of gold upon her heart.

And all the while this wonderful life of visions and raptures was being lived, blessed Catharine's surroundings were those of

a poor peasant woman, obliged to work hard to earn daily bread for herself and her family. She would sometimes feel tempted to repine at being thus continually kept at her weaving without a minute's respite; and once, when she was only nine years old, as she thought of the hunger and want her poor mother had to endure, she leant her head on her loom and burst into tears, fervently commending the misery of her home to the providence of God. Then her Divine Spouse appeared to her under the form of a child as forlorn and destitute as herself and asked an alms of her. She answered, that, much as she would have desired to help Him, she had not a single thing on earth that she could bestow. Then the Holy Child made Himself known to her, gave her a piece of money to provide food for the family, and encouraged her to bear poverty cheerfully after His example.

As a true daughter of St. Dominic, blessed Catharine was full of zeal for souls, and once besought her Divine Spouse to shut the gates of Hell. When told that her desire was an impossible one, she implored that He would exercise His justice on herself and have compassion on poor sinners. She was often taken in a miraculous manner to visit persons who lived at a great distance from her home, that she might warn them of the spiritual dangers which threatened them. By her prayers and penances she obtained the release of many souls from Purgatory, and she was sometimes permitted to take their sufferings upon herself, and thus to hasten their admission to the joys of Paradise.

After a life of wonderful union with God and entire self-renunciation, she died, abandoned by her friends and deprived even of her confessor, on September 4, A.D. 1547, in her sixty-second year. She was beatified by Pius VII.

We read in the life of B. Catharine de Raconigi that, one day, when suffering so intensely as to need the assistance of her sisters in religion, she thought of the souls in Purgatory, and, to temper the heat of their flames, she offered to God the burning heat of her fever. At that moment, being rapt in ecstasy, she was conducted in spirit into the place of expiation,

where she saw the flames and braziers in which the souls are purified in great torture. Whilst contemplating, full of compassion, this piteous spectacle, she heard a voice which said to her: "Catharine, in order that you may procure most efficaciously the deliverance of these souls, you shall participate, in some manner, in their torments." At that same moment a spark detached itself from the fire and settled upon her left cheek. The sisters present saw the spark distinctly, and saw also with horror that the face of the sick person was frightfully swollen. She lived several days in this state, and, as B. Catharine told her sisters, the suffering caused by that simple spark far surpassed all that she had previously endured in the most painful maladies. Until that time Catharine had always devoted herself with charity to the relief of the souls in Purgatory, but from thenceforward she redoubled her fervor to hasten their deliverance, because she knew by experience the great need in which they stood of her assistance.

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Because thou wert the flower wherein
  Heaven's holiest Dew would one day rest;
Because upon thy lily heart
  Would hide, ere long, the Perfect Guest,
Lo! God kept sin apart from thee,
Lest sin should taint Christ's purity.

Because thou wert ordained to be
  The cup to hold the Living Wine;
Because upon thy breast alone
  Would rest the Christ-child's head Divine,
God did preserve thee pure within,
Immaculate, unknown to sin.

O perfect flower, wherein was laid
  The perfect Gift, God's only Son!
O matchless lily, on whose heart
  Slept peacefully the Matchless One,
There was no flower on earth like thee
To woo from heaven Divinity!

Charles Hanson Towne.

APPARITION
TO
B. MAGDALEN PANNATIERI, V O.S.D.
TRINO, ITALY

1503

Oh, Mother! Blessed Mother, pray forgive
My wayward heart, and teach me how to live
A Christian life, so pleasing in thy sight,
That, day by day, I may receive the light
Which shines in hearts of those who love thee well,
And learn at sorrow never to rebel.

Elliot Ryder.

BLESSED MAGDALEN PANNATIERI was born at Trino, in the north of Italy, A.D. 1443. She was richly gifted, both by nature and grace, and received an excellent education. Whilst still a child, she chose Jesus Christ for her Spouse, and bound herself to Him by a vow of perpetual virginity, endeavoring to keep her heart detached from all earthly things. Desiring to consecrate herself more entirely to the Beloved of her soul, she took the habit of the Third Order whilst very young and strove to make her life resemble those of St. Dominic and St. Catharine of Siena. She practised severe fasts all the year, disciplined herself to blood every night, wore a rough hair-shirt, and took her scanty rest on the bare ground, spending the greater part of her time in fervent prayer.

She was favored with frequent raptures and apparitions; on every festival she was granted a vision of the mystery or of the Saint honored by the Church on that day. This was particularly the case in Holy Week, when she was admitted to a mysterious and visible participation in the sufferings of her Divine Spouse, and in Easter Week, when her countenance appeared radiant with celestial light. Our Blessed Lady often manifested

herself to her and laid the Divine Child in her arms. She was frequently visited by the holy Apostles, SS. Peter and Paul, to whom she had a special devotion. Many times she was taken in spirit to the holy places of Palestine, of which she was able to give a minute and accurate description. She assured her confessor that she had never asked anything of our Lord or of His Blessed Mother which had not been granted to her, either wholly or in part, according to the fervor of her supplication. God bestowed on her the gift of miracles and of prophecy, and made known to her the terrible calamities which were threatening her native country in the wars between the French king Francis I., and the Emperor Charles V., who made Northern Italy their battle ground. By her fervent supplications she succeeded in averting the Divine wrath from her own village of Trino.

The heroic sanctity of blessed Magdalen and the ardent zeal with which, as a true daughter of St. Dominic, she devoted herself in procuring the salvation of souls, made her a special object of hatred to the devil, who was permitted to assail her with many and grievous temptations, and even to appear to her, scourging and tormenting her in a horrible manner. But her courage in the midst of these infernal attacks was undaunted. Blessed Magdalen had a very special devotion to the Most Holy Name of Jesus. The Passion of her Divine Spouse was the frequent subject of her contemplation, and she longed to undergo pain and humiliation for Him who had suffered so much and been so deeply humbled for her.

After spending the morning in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, she was accustomed daily to visit all the sick in the village, ministering to their spiritual and temporal needs with the utmost charity. She loved to serve her Divine Spouse in the person of His poor. She would entertain them at her table, even when they were suffering from the most loathsome diseases, serving them herself, and making her own meal on the leavings of their repast. She had a wonderful gift of influencing others, and spoke with such sweetness and efficacy that people were never weary of listening to her holy exhortations.

When she knew that the end of her earthly pilgrimage was near, she summoned all the Sisters of the Third Order around her, humbly begged their pardon for any offence or bad example she might have given them, earnestly exhorting them to mutual charity and the observance of their Rule, and bade them an affectionate farewell, promising to be mindful of them in the presence of their Heavenly Spouse, whom she hoped shortly to behold face to face. When the news of her illness spread abroad, people came in crowds from all the surrounding country, anxious to see and speak to her once more and to commend themselves to her prayers. She welcomed them all with tender charity and gave them wise and holy counsels.

Suddenly the servant of God, fixing her eyes on one corner of the chamber in which she lay, bade the bystanders make room for heavenly visitors. She then seemed to be rapt in ecstasy, her countenance radiant with joy. Those who knelt around could see nothing, but were conscious of a celestial fragrance which perfumed the air. When blessed Magdalen came to herself, she told her confessor that our Lord and His Blessed Mother had been to visit her, accompanied by St. Catharine the Martyr and several Saints of the Order. She then made her general confession and received the Last Sacraments with the deepest sentiments of contrition and devotion; after which she sweetly intoned the hymns Jesu nostra redemptio and Ave Maris Stella, which she sang throughout in company with those who were assisting at this holy and happy death bed, as also the psalm: "In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped," as far as the words: "Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit." The same celestial fragrance again perfumed the air, announcing that our Lord had fulfilled the promise made to His servant that He would come again with His Blessed Mother and the Saints and take her to Himself; and blessed Magdalen calmly breathed forth her soul to Him. It was the 13th of October, A.D. 1503. Her death was followed by many miracles, and she was beatified by Leo XII.

HYMN TO THE VIRGIN

Ave Maria! maiden mild,
  Listen to a maiden's prayer;
Thou canst hear, though from the wild;
  Thou canst save amid despair.
Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,
  Though banished, outcast, and reviled—
Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer,
  Mother, hear a suppliant child!
    Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! undefiled!
  The flinty couch we now must share,
Shall seem with down of eider piled,
  If thy protection hover there.
The murky cavern's heavy air
  Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled,
Then Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;
  Mother, list a suppliant child!
    Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! stainless styled,
  Foul demons of the earth and air,
From this their wonted haunt exiled,
  Shall flee before thy presence fair.
We bow us to our lot of care
  Beneath thy guidance reconciled;
Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer,
  And for a father hear a child!
    Ave Maria!

Sir Walter Scott.

APPARITION
TO
BLESSED OSANNA, V.O.S.D.
MANTUA, ITALY
1504

True Gate of Heaven! As light through glass
So He who never left the sky
To this low earth was pleased to pass,
Through thine unstained Virginity.

Aubrey de Vere.

BLESSED OSANNA was born of wealthy parents at Mantua, Italy, A.D. 1449. When she was six years old, the family went to spend the summer in the country. One day as little Osanna was wandering alone in the meadows by the riverside, an angel appeared to her and instructed her in the love of God, saying to her: "See how every creature proclaims with all its might, 'Love God, all ye dwellers on the earth, for He hath made all things in order to win your love.'" Soon afterwards our Lord Himself met her on the same spot in the form of a lovely child, with a crown of thorns upon His head, and bearing on His shoulders a heavy Cross.

"My beloved child," said He to Osanna, "I am the Son of the Virgin Mary and thy Creator. I have always loved children, because their hearts are pure. I willingly admit virgins as My spouses; I guard their virginity; and when they call upon Me with the words, 'O Good Jesus,' I instantly come to their assistance." This vision was the call to Osanna to follow her Divine Spouse in the path of His sufferings, and she responded to it by an act of entire consecration of herself to His Will.

It was her ardent desire to dedicate herself solemnly to God's service in some convent, but, after many negotiations for this object had failed, it was revealed to her that she was not to

enter the cloister, but to sanctify herself in the world, as a Tertiary of the Order of St. Dominic. This determination caused great grief to her parents; nor was it until a dangerous illness had brought her to the brink of the grave that they would consent to her receiving the habit, which she at last did at the age of fourteen. It was not, however, permitted to her for a long series of years to make her solemn profession. She constantly longed for this happiness, but, understanding that the obstacles which were continually raised against it were ordained by God for her greater perfection, she humbly submitted herself to His Divine Will. It was not until she had attained the age of fifty-five, that, in the last year of her life, she at length publicly bound herself by the vows of religion. She had, however, at the time of her clothing, made a private vow of obedience, and would never do the slightest thing without the leave of those who were placed over her.

Blessed Osanna was favored with continual raptures and ecstasies in prayer, which she was unable to conceal from the busy eyes of the curious, and these heavenly favors were made a constant subject of reproof and persecution. The other Tertiaries persisted in regarding them as nothing but a voluntary affectation of sanctity, and threatened to deprive her of the habit unless they ceased. They also murmured greatly because, as the fame of her sanctity spread, persons of rank thronged about her to ask her counsel or to gratify their curiosity. But Osanna's patience and humility were never in the least disturbed. Her Divine Spouse had made known to her, as in earlier times to St. Catharine of Siena, and later to blessed Margaret Mary, the secret of His Heart; and we are expressly told that it was to that never-failing fountain of consolation that she had recourse whenever tribulation pressed heavily upon her. And, when prevented from approaching the Sacrament of Penance as often as she would have wished, she confessed her daily frailties to her Good Jesus, as she loved to call Him.

The nuptials with the Beloved of her soul, which she so ardently desired to accomplish by her profession, and which were in that manner delayed for so many years, were mystically sol-

emnized in the presence of the Mother of God and the whole court of Heaven. This and other spiritual favors more and more increased the fire of Divine love which burnt within her and filled her with an equally ardent desire to suffer. Grieving that she could not be more conformed to the likeness of her crucified Lord, she one day cast herself at His feet, exclaiming: "O my only Love! Must the thorns then be for Thee alone, the nails and the Cross; and for me sweetness and consolation? Ah! not so. I will not share Thy glory unless Thou make me also share Thy pains." And thus for two years she incessantly besought the Eternal goodness to grant her that which her soul longed after, a conformity of suffering. Then at length the crown of thorns was granted to her, and, later on, the sacred Stigmata. At each of these heavenly favors, the agony of her mortal frame increased to an almost inconceivable extent; yet still she was not satisfied. A longing arose in her heart to share in those unknown and awful sufferings which filled the heart of Jesus whilst He hung upon the Cross. Then, in answer to her prayer, her Divine Spouse plunged into her loving heart a long and terrible nail. The agony of this transfixion must have caused her death, had not the same Divine hand relieved her; but this cutting and dividing of her heart was often repeated in after years, in answer to her unsatisfied entreaties. During this life of mysterious suffering, Osanna ceased not to labor for the souls of others by prayer and works of charity, and often offered her body and soul to God to receive the chastisement due to inveterate sinners or to the poor souls in Purgatory.

Her approaching death was announced to her four years previously by blessed Columba of Rieti, who appeared to her in great glory at the moment of her own departure out of this life.

The death of blessed Osanna took place on the 18th of June, A.D. 1505. Three years afterwards her body was still incorrupt. Leo X. gave permission for her feast to be celebrated in the diocese of Mantua, and this privilege was extended to the Dominican Order by Innocent XII.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Guide thou my pen, O Mother, best and dearest;
For how can sinner write on theme so high?
Inspire my heart with visions brightest, clearest,
For nothing will be hard if thou art nigh.

Speak to my soul, and tell the wondrous story,
How God forever marked thee as His Own—
Fair Vessel that should hold such floods of glory,
Yea, hold Himself, the great Eternal One.

And pure He destined thee, and pure preserved thee,
In soul and body bright, Immaculate;;
From the dread curse original reserved thee,
One Pearl amid a world so desolate.

Bravely, O Mother, has thy heart responded;
Well hast thou treasured every loving grace;
Never, for one brief hour, hast thou desponded,
Or shrunk from the stern duties of thy place.

From first to last, in holy trust believing
Things that were far beyond all human lore,
From first to last, yet higher gifts receiving,
And offering up to God the fruit they bore.

Thy heart is one vast field for meditation:
Mother, I write no more—I can but pray;
And raise my heart in grateful adoration
To Him who worketh in a wondrous way.

Mother, look down in holiest compassion
On those who will not see how dear thou art:
Drive far from them the clouds of pride and passion,
And join us all within thy loving heart.

Lady Catherine Petre.

RAPHAEL'S FAMOUS MADONNA OF ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA

1506

No wonder painters rave and men go wild,
O'er Raphael's Madonna and the Child;
For what can tell a tale of perfect bliss,
If not the blending trust and love in this.
The Overland Monthly.

THE picture measures 96 by 67 inches. The Blessed Virgin forms the center of the principal panel. She is seated on a richly adorned throne, and her dress consists of a red robe and a blue mantle worked with gold.

On her right knee she holds the Infant Saviour, who is clothed in a white tunic edged with blue; embroidered on the shoulder of the tunic is the parti-colored Scapular of St. Anthony of Padua. The Holy Child wears also a blue cloak and a brown belt.

There is an expression of tender feeling depicted on the face of the Virgin Mother as she looks down at the little St. John who is standing by her other knee. He is dressed in a shirt of camel's hair and robes of green, gold and purple. With folded hands he is looking up lovingly at the Divine Infant, who answers with a blessing.

At either side stand the Saints Catherine and Cecilia, and in front of them are St. Peter and St. Paul, each holding an open book. A conspicuous feature in all these figures is their monumental attitudes and the grand style of their draperies.

The picture has always been considered a gem of art, and it is now further distinguished by bringing the highest price ever paid for a canvas.

RAPHAEL THE DIVINE

The news from the Old World that one of our American money kings has purchased a Raphael Madonna for a half million dollars creates a sensation in art circles that sends a ripple of interest even out into the midst of the "madding crowd."

Five hundred thousand dollars for a picture—but what a picture! A celebrated Madonna by Raphael "the Divine." Our estimation of the almighty dollar goes up a bit. Money, enough of it to buy a famous Madonna, is something worth having, after all.

The Paris despatch tells us that the picture in question was painted by Raphael in 1505, for the Convent of St. Anthony of Padua at Perugia. It was guarded by the nuns for one hundred and seventy years, and then, in order to pay the debts of the institution, they parted with their treasure. It passed into the hands of the Colonnas, a princely Italian family. For one hundred and twenty years it was in the private gallery of the Colonnas. In 1802 it left their gallery for that of Ferdinand, King of Naples. It shared the changing fortunes of that monarch, and after his death it was sold to M. Sedelmeyer, from whom it was recently purchased by our great magnate, J. Pierpont Morgan, for $500,000.

Not since the Ansidei Madonna was sold from the Blenheim collection to the British National Gallery in 1884, at a cost of over three hundred thousand dollars, has such a sum of money changed hands at the sale of any one picture.

Even those of us who have but gathered of the crumbs and fragments that fall by the way from the beautiful art world, must feel our hearts burn with longing to know more of the life and the work of this great painter of Madonnas, called by those of his own generation "Raphael the Divine." And is he not divine? This great master of art, in whose pictures of the Madonnas "there prevails now the loving mother, now the ideal of feminine beauty . . . until he reaches the most glorious representation of the Queen of Heaven."

Many connoisseurs have divided the works of Raphael into three classes: his first style, when under the influence of his instructors' manner; his second, when he painted in Florence, and his third style, distinguishable in his works executed after he settled in Rome. The first manner is said to embody the greatest purity and religious feeling; his last is held to have attained the highest art, while his middle, or Florentine style, exemplifies his powers freed from the manner of his instructors and as yet untainted by conventionalism of classic art. The Madonna now in J. Pierpont Morgan's possession is after the Florentine style.

From the Plan Book, a work of public instruction, the following interesting items are taken:

"Most of us know and love that most beautiful and famous of all the Madonnas, the Sistine Madonna, and the Madonna of the Chair, but how many of us know anything of the artist who produced these masterpieces? He is said to have lived the most perfect life and to have been most generally beloved and praised of all the painters in the world. It is easy to believe this when we look at his pictures and see his thoughts pictured on canvas."

The writer tells us of Raphael's birthplace, Urbino, a little town nestled among the Apenine Mountains, a section noted for its landscape beauty. The house where he was born still stands, and from its windows you can see the Adriatic Sea. We are told of his father, who was an artist and a poet, and of the mother, "a woman of unusual sweetness of disposition and beauty of character." His home life was an ideal one, and everywhere around him, in sky and sea and land, was beauty, and the child Raphael's soul felt the impress. But when he was twelve years of age he was left an orphan, and as he had shown talent in painting, he was sent by his uncle to a painter by the name of Perugino, who had a studio in Perugia, a town not far from Urbino. When this artist saw the work of Raphael, he was much pleased and exclaimed: "Let him be my pupil; he will soon become my master." Raphael remained nine years in the studio in Perugia. He returned to Urbino only to remain

but a brief season. He had heard of Florence, its beautiful art treasures, and he longed to go there. At last this wish was realized. A lady who was much interested in the genius of the young painter gave him a letter to the Governor of Florence, asking that he be allowed to see the art treasures of the city.

"While Raphael was painting Madonnas in Florence," continues the narrator, "a great honor came to him. The Pope called him to Rome. He was given the commission to decorate buildings which belonged to St. Peter's and apartments of the Vatican."

Much stress is laid upon the sweetness and gentleness of the character of Raphael by the writer, and his exceeding humility is particularly emphasized. On one occasion, when Pope Julius II. directed that certain frescoes should be erased and their places filled by Raphael—Raphael, forgetting the honor to his own genius, set about copying as many as possible of the portraits ordered to be destroyed.

Our Lady's special artist, her painter in ordinary, is Raphael. "No artist," writes Darras, "has painted the Blessed Virgin with more affection. It would seem that Raphael had consecrated his genius to the Mother of God; and of the manifold forms in which he has depicted her blessed image, there is not one before which we do not feel constrained to kneel."

"The mere collection of all the Virgins painted or even designed by Raphael," says Quartremere de Quincy, "and the detail of the variations which he introduced into his compositions, would form an abridged history of his genius."

At the approach of death, his love for his Blessed Mother grew more ardent and more confiding than ever. He expressed the desire of being buried in the Church of Sancta Maria ad Martyres (the former Pantheon), and added a wish that a marble statue of Our Lady should be placed above his tomb. Finally, on Good Friday, in 1520, fortified by the Sacraments of the Church, and loyally reliant on the good offices of Her to whom in childhood he had been dedicated, and whom he had so often glorified during his brief career, the artist-servant of Mary passed away.

Raphael died on his thirty-seventh birthday, and all the city mourned for its best loved artist, for it is said he had friends in every class of people. "By prince and peasant he was universally beloved," is chronicled of him. "He had," writes one, "what every living person may have, a spirit that did not find fault; lips that spoke no censure of anyone, but praise where praise was possible, and such self-control that not an enemy was ever made by his temper or lack of consideration for others."

So far we have glimpsed our painter through non-Catholic eyes; now let us turn to the writings of Eliza Allen Starr, and view him through the Catholic vision, with the halo of his religion about him. Of his home she writes:

"Come with me to it; knock at the modest door; enter the spacious but unostentatious apartments. Still better, meet there the pious, affable poet and painter, Giovanni Santi; his lovely, gentle, pious wife and the angelic boy, to whom they gave so fitly the name of Raphael; from his very birth an angel of beauty, of amiability, of tender piety. But the atmosphere of the home—how shall we describe it? An atmosphere of peace, for it was an atmosphere in which Giovanni Santi could paint Madonnas. The favorite pastime of the little Raphael was to play with the brushes and colors in his father's studio, and his first recollection went back to some Madonna on his father's easel. The life led by this family of the Strada Del Monte was not only a good Christian life, but an ideal Christian life. Saints and angels, their feasts, their patronage came into the daily routine of the household, which was not content with the crumbs dropped from the Christian table, but sat as guests at the board and partook of its heavenly delights. That charm which invests the dogmas, the practices of a Christian's year and a Christian's week, and even hour; which makes the sound of the Angelus bell so dear and the recitation of the Angelus so consoling; which makes the Rosary a veritable string of meditations as beautiful, as poetic as the roses of Persia; this charm was felt and understood and fully valued by the family of the Santi.

"Nothing lovelier as a merely human habitation was ever known on earth than this household on the Strada del Monte in Urbino, but this did not save it from sorrow."

And here Miss Starr tells us of the death of the grandmother and that of the mother only four days later, and of the three years' companionship between Raphael and his saintly father ere he, too, was taken from earth, and Raphael was left an orphan. We seem to enter with singular sympathy into the loneliness of the child as we read: "At eleven years of age Raphael was an orphan. No one can say what was the effect of all this upon the imagination of the wonderful boy, to whom God had given what God alone can bestow, not only life, but the genius which vivifies the lives of others."

And further on we read with emotions of grateful relief: "In the studio of Perugino all the most sacred traditions of Umbria were faithfully nourished in the soul of his pupil, and thus the aroma of his first tender years on the Strada del Monte was never dissipated."

No attempt is made here to give any idea of Miss Starr's tributes to Raphael and his work, but simply an effort is made to see him surrounded by the halo of his religion, and particularly that of the early influences of his pious, beautiful home life. And in regard to this she adds in conclusion:

"The home in which Raphael was born, endowed with the heritage of Christian ideality, may well excite the emulation of the mothers and fathers of to-day. It was not the occupation of an artist, the mere handling of the implements of art, which made that home so attractive; so powerful, too, as an incentive to perfection. It was rather the sentiments of piety, of veneration, which guided its avocations, refined its manners, elevated its tastes; above all, it was the faithful cherishing of the traditions of piety which had come down with the ages, and which made each generation a participator in the heroism, the sanctity of all which had gone before, even to the Apostolic day and generation. It is only in such a society that such works as the Madonnas of Raphael can be produced, or even appreciated. We must come as they came, loving worshipers

to the Crib of the Babe of Bethlehem. We must kneel there with Mary and Joseph, St. John Baptist and Elizabeth, if we would enter into our possession as Christians of that poetry in art which is an exponent of the highest faith as well as of the highest culture."

Raphael's "Sistine Madonna" is always mentioned among the greatest pictures of the world, and some places is at the head of the list. The Mother with the beautiful Christ Child in her arms stands upon the clouds. On one side is St. Barbara; on the other, St. Sixtus. At her feet are two little cherubs with unlifted eyes. The legends regarding these lovely cherubs will probably interest my young readers more than those relating to St. Sixtus or St. Barbara. The legends disagree; each can choose for himself which to accept as the origin of the beautiful little faces.

According to one legend, when the great artist was painting this picture two pretty boys watched him as he worked, in the attitudes of the cherubs, and so the thought came to him to place them at the feet of the Madonna and Christ Child.

Another legend tells us that when Raphael was lying in bed one night with his thoughts dwelling on his work, he fell asleep, and in a dream seemed to see these cherubs leaning on the footboard before him. When he awoke, this lovely dream haunted him, and at last became a part of his great painting.

Another legend shows us the picture finished without the cherubs and hung up for exhibition with a railing before it to protect it from injury. It tells us that two pretty boys got behind this railing and leaned upon it; that Raphael came in, and seeing them, afterward added them to his picture as adoring cherubs. But this painting was designed by the artist for a standard or banner to be carried in procession and was used by the monks as an altar piece; so its history does not harmonize very well with that legend.

The story I like best to associate with the cherubs is this: that when Raphael was traveling over the country longing for some models to represent the beautiful thoughts he had in his mind, he saw a lovely mother with sweet twin boys looking up

into her face with the rapt expression of the cherubs, while she told them the story of the Christ Child.

The artist won the love and confidence of these boys, invited them to his studio, and they gladly became models for his famous picture.

Several reasons are given for the name of the painting—"Sistine Madonna." Some say it comes from the six figures. Others say it is so called because it was painted for the Convent of St. Sixtus at Piacenza. Some think the name refers to one of the figures, St. Sixtus.

This painting is now one of the treasures of the Art Gallery at Dresden, having been bought by Augustus III., elector of Saxony, of the monks of Piacenza for nearly thirty thousand dollars. Its value has recently been estimated at over seven hundred thousand dollars.

The little tower behind St. Barbara refers to her imprisonment, the punishment she received for her steadfastness to the Christian religion.

The halo about the Madonna and the little Child come from many angel faces. The curtains drawn aside suggest a vision.

"An admirer of this painting declares with enthusiasm that one might study it every day for a year, and on the last day of the year find in it a new beauty and a new joy."—Lydia Whitehead Wright.

RAPHAEL'S MADONNAS

"Even after his epic work in the Vatican," Armengaud observes, "we may see that the Virgin remains the supreme creation of Raphael. Upon her he concentrated all the effort and all the progress of his art. His Madonnas resemble those Hours which he painted more or less robust or delicate according as they go away from or draw nearer to the sun; they gain redoubled force, expression, and plenitude as they approach the noonday of his genius—that noonday which had no evening. From the Virgin of Perugia to the Madonna of St. Sixtus, Mary traverses in his work a whole armament of beauty.

At the end Mary no longer belongs to earth; she appears to him only across the incalculable distances of her Assumption. Her human family has given place to the saintly and angelic court; her countenance lightens and becomes transfigured; the feminine and motherly smiles vanish from her lips: immutable serenity, eternal peace, impassible felicity are the only sentiments that her irradiated features henceforth express."

In the Madonna di San Sisto, Raphael has carried this form of composition to the highest perfection. When Sir Frederick Leighton was asked what work of art (as a painting) he considered the greatest in the world, he answered at once, "The Madonna di San Sisto," adding that for grandeur of subject, virility and simplicity in the composition and color, and above all, for the poetic tenderness and grace that pervade the whole work, he knew of nothing as a work of art that came within measurable distance of it. It throbs with the thought of "Divinity so near to humanity, that the Son of God could be born of a woman and rest in the shelter of mother love."

It is estimated that Raphael left one hundred and twenty pictures of Our Blessed Lady. They express in wonderful variation the loveliness, tenderness and purity of the Virgin Mother, and the beauty, grace and serene innocence of the Divine Child. The most celebrated of Raphael's Madonnas are the Madonna di Foligno, in the Vatican; the Madonna of the Fish, at Madrid; the Madonna di San Sisto, at Dresden; the Madonna called the Pearl, at Madrid, and the lovely pastoral Madonnas, the Belle Jardiniere of the Louvre Gallery; the Madonna in the Meadow, in the Belvedere Gallery, Vienna, and the Madonna of the Goldfinch of the Uffizi, Florence.

MOTHER AND CHILD

In vesture white, the Eternal Child
Lay on His mother's lap and smiled:
  What joy to see the longed-for sight—
  Her Spotless Lily of delight,
Her Love, her Dove, her Undefiled.

She recked not of her anguish wild,
The sorrow upon sorrow piled.
His dead form, swathed one awful night
In vesture white.

Oh, let our hearts this birthday bright
The sorrow and the joy unite;
While, by the twofold grace beguiled
Of suffering Man and Infant mild,
We walk with Him on faith's calm height,
In vesture white.

Richard Wilton.

"Mary is the glory of virgins, the joy of mothers, the support of the faithful, the crown of the Church, the true model of faith, seal of piety, the rule of truth, the ornament of virtue, the Sanctuary of the Holy Trinity."—*St. Proclus.*

PRAYER—"VIRGIN MOST HOLY"

Virgin most holy, Mother of the Word Incarnate, Treasurer of graces, Refuge of us poor sinners; we fly to thy maternal love with lively faith, and we ask thee to obtain for us grace ever to do the will of God and thine own. Into thy most holy hands we commit the keeping of our hearts; beseeching thee for health of soul and body, in the certain hope that thou, our most loving Mother, will hear our prayer. Wherefore with lively faith we say,

Hail, Mary, etc., *thrice.*

Defend, O Lord, we beseech Thee, us Thy servants, through the intercession of the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, from all infirmity, both of body and soul; and mercifully protect from the snares of enemies those who, with their whole heart, prostrate themselves before Thee. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

100 *days, once a day.*

APPARITION

TO

ST. CAJETAN [F. THEATINS]
LOMBARDY, ITALY

1517

Since Jesus is King
And Mary our Mother,
Then Mary is Queen,
And Jesus our brother.

Max Walter Mannix.

T. CAJETAN was born at Vicenza in 1480, and was dedicated from infancy to the Blessed Mother of God. After having made legal studies with great distinction at Padua, he was appointed Prothonotary Apostolic at the Roman Curia. But he gave all the time he could spare to the work of pious fraternities, spending his fortune in building hospitals and devoting himself in person to the nursing of the plague-stricken. Finally, his zeal for souls led him to resign his office and enter the priesthood. In 1524, in conjunction with Bishop Caraffa, who was afterwards Pope, he founded the first congregation of regular clerks, which took its name from Chieti, or Theate, the See over which his co-laborer had presided.

"They embraced a more than Franciscan poverty," says Mr. Arnold, " for they bound themselves not only to have no property or rents, but to abstain from asking for alms, being persuaded that the providence of God and the unsolicited charity of the faithful would sufficiently supply their wants."

The Theatins devoted themselves to preaching the administration of the sacraments, and the careful performance of the rites and ceremonies of the Church. They have produced many eminent men, including Cardinal Thomassi and Father Ventura. The holy brotherhood lived in Rome on Mount Pincio,

and the year after settling there, the Constable of Bourbon, commander of the army of Charles V., marched from Milan to Rome, and took the city in May, 1527. Philibert of Chalons, Prince of Orange, who succeeded in command after the wicked Constable had been slain, plundered the city, and was guilty of great cruelties. The house of the Theatins shared the fate of the rest, and St. Cajetan being recognized, and imagined to be possessed of great wealth, was barbarously scourged and tortured to extort from him his supposed treasure.

The mystery of the Nativity was his special subject of contemplation, in which the eternal love of God for man was made so wonderfully manifest. It was in the year 1517, when, according to his custom, Cajetan was rapt in ecstasy before the altar of the Crib on Christmas eve. Tears flowed down his cheeks, so deeply was he moved by the mystery of the birth of the Lord, whom he pictured to himself as a little helpless Child lying in the arms of His Mother. Then arose in his heart the great desire to entreat the venerable Mother of God that she would lay the Divine Child in his arms, but his humility permitted him not. Whilst, however, his heart longed for this favor, behold! there appeared to him St. Jerome and St. Joseph, who desired him to hold out his arms and approach them to the Divine Mother. He did so, and the Queen of Angels truly laid the Child Jesus in his arms. The happiness which entered into his heart, passes description. The impression which this vision left behind never departed from the holy man during the course of his life, but so often as he received the Body and Blood of the Lord in Holy Communion he paused a little, believing that Mary herself was there offering him, under the form of the most Holy Sacrament, her Divine Child to caress.

St. Cajetan was the first to introduce the custom of the Forty Hours' Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament as a means of counteracting the heresy of Calvin, who propagated a fearful disrespect for the Eucharistic Presence of our Lord.

He always cherished a tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin and when, writes Father Bowden:

"He was on his death-bed, resigned to the Will of God, eager for pain to satisfy his love, and for death to attain to life, he beheld the Mother of God, radiant with splendor, and surrounded by the ministering seraphim. In profound veneration, he said: 'Lady, bless me!' Mary replied: 'Cajetan, receive the blessing of my Son, and know that I am here as a reward for the sincerity of your love, and to lead you to Paradise.' She then exhorted him to patience in fighting an evil spirit who troubled him, and gave orders to the choirs of angels to escort his soul in triumph to Heaven. Then turning her countenance full of majesty and sweetness upon him, she said: 'Cajetan, my Son calls thee. Let us go in peace.'"

When his hour of death came, his physicians told him not to lie on the floor, but he replied, "My Saviour died upon the Cross; suffer me to die upon ashes." Thus died St. Cajetan on the 7th August, 1547.

THE ORIGIN OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE PERPETUAL ADORATION AND THE EXPOSITION OF THE FORTY HOURS

Several Fathers of the Theatine Order, taking example by the zeal of their saintly founder, could not endure that Our Divine Redeemer, who in His love stays with us in the Most Holy Sacrament under the form of an insignificant Host, should be so little sought, honored, and praised with thanksgiving. The thought, therefore, occurred to them to found a congregation whose members should undertake in turns to pray before the Blessed Sacrament. All the hours of the year were distributed amongst the members, so that every hour of the year the Most Holy Sacrament should be adored in deepest humility.

Besides the devotion of the perpetual adoration, which was the result of the love of our Lord, the same congregation founded that of the Exposition of the Quarent' Ore, or Forty Hours, in honor of the forty hours during which the body of Jesus lay in the grave.

IN MARY'S ARMS

He comes not to awe me—
To thrill me with fear:
He seeks but to draw me,
To woo me, to win me:
This frail heart within me,
He holds it so dear!

He comes not in splendor,
Though Fountain of light.
In guise the most tender
He hastens to meet me—
In babe-form to greet me
This calm Christmas night.

The arms of Thy Mother,
How sweetly they hold Thee,
Divine Baby-Brother!
Ah, let me dare say it—
For fond looks betray it—
Mine too would enfold Thee!

But nay! Let Her press Thee
To that sinless breast:
Mine would but distress Thee!
So oft has it griev'd Thee,
And wrong'd and deceiv'd Thee,
'Twould trouble Thy rest.

My Queen, I adore Him
Enthroned on thy Heart:
And meekly implore Him
That I in its pleading,
Its pure interceding,
May ever have part.

Through thee, Blessed Mother,
He comes to be mine—
My Saviour, My Brother.
Through thee, while I take Him,
Return will I make Him,
My life-love in thine!

Edmund of the Heart of Mary, C. P.

APPARITION
TO
GAVAN DUNBAR BP.
ABERDEEN, SCOTLAND
1520

"Forgive, great Mother, all the years
Wherein I passed thee by unknown;
Forgive the weak, unworthy fears
Of faithfulness to Jesus' throne.
Men say that loving thee, I dim
The glory of thy Son Divine,
But otherwise I learn of Him,
And call thee His, and find thee mine."

William C. Dix.

NOT far from the shores of the German Ocean, situated between two great rivers,—the Dee and the Don,—is the ancient city of Aberdeen. In the year 1110, when David I. was King of Scotland, it became the see of a bishop, whose cathedral was the Church of St. Macarius. Although at that time this city was one of the most important in the kingdom, it has since lost much of its celebrity on account of its proximity to New Aberdeen, which has sprung up almost at its side. It is now more generally known by the name of Old Aberdeen, or the "Altoun."

What made this city so famous in times gone by was its attachment to the Catholic religion. From the earliest times the faith was preached there by saintly bishops and holy monks who, by their example and piety, as well as by the miracles which God wrought at their hands, converted the followers of paganism to the true God. In after times a celebrated university was founded there, from which, as from a luminous centre, many men illustrious for their sanctity and learning issued, to spread the light of the Gospel throughout the whole kingdom, and even to countries beyond the seas.

It was only toward the middle of the sixteenth century, when heresy devastated the land, that this fair spot also gave way and yielded to the force of the tempest.

In the cathedral church of St. Macarius, there was a statue of Our Lady made of wood. For more than six hundred years this image had been an object of veneration to the faithful. Many miracles were wrought and many spiritual favors were granted by Our Blessed Mother in behalf of those who sought her aid at this venerable Shrine; and immense multitudes of the faithful came, even from afar, to pray there, and to implore the protection of Our Lady of Aberdeen.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century there lived in Aberdeen a Bishop named Gavin Dunbar. His eminent sanctity procured for him the esteem and respect of every one, even of those who were enemies of the Catholic religion. His residence was near the cathedral, and he never allowed a day to pass without going to the altar of Mary and pouring out his soul in fervent prayer. It was also by Our Lady's help that he succeeded in erecting a bridge of seven arches over the river Dee. After the custom of Catholic times, he constructed a little chapel on the first arch of the bridge; in it he placed the holy image of Mary, which he caused to be solemnly translated from the cathedral in the Altoun to its new sanctuary, in order that those who were setting out upon a journey or returning home might place themselves under her protection. The chapel has now entirely disappeared, although its site is still pointed out; and the fishermen who at the present day ply their craft on that part of the river give it the name of "Chapel Nook," or the "Chapel Corner."

Not far from this chapel, near the end of the bridge, sprang up a little fountain of limpid water, and many miracles are recorded to have been wrought by its use through the intercession of Our Lady. One day a heretic, to show his hatred for the Mother of God, threw a quantity of filth into the well. But God's vengeance soon overtook him. On the spot he was seized with a terrible malady; a hunger which nothing could satiate seemed to consume his bowels, and he cried out: "I am

stricken by God for what I have done!" And he warned all who saw and heard him never to speak against, or in any way dishonor, the Holy Virgin, lest a similar evil should overtake them. The heretics themselves, who were witnesses of the crime and of the awful punishment which followed, were forced to acknowledge that it came from the hand of God.

After this event, and in order to preserve the Shrine from further profanation, the Bishop caused the statue to be carried back to its former resting-place in the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral. Here, as before, it drew together immense multitudes, and became more famous than ever on account of the number of miracles which the Queen of Heaven wrought in favor of her devoted clients.

One day, in the year 1520, the Bishop was on his knees praying and weeping before the holy image, when suddenly he heard a voice come forth from the statue, which said that, on account of the sins of the people, great calamities were about to befall the Scottish nation, and that Scotland would apostatize from the true faith. "Alas, Gavin!" continued the voice, "thou art the last bishop of this city, in these times, that shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." The terrible corruption of morals which soon afterward spread over the land carried with it people of every age and condition, and opened an entrance to that great heresy which even at the present day devastates that unhappy country.

More than a century after the death of the holy Bishop, Almighty God, who is honored in His Saints, wished to glorify on earth the memory of that great servant of Mary, even in that very city where the light of the Catholic faith, which for nearly twelve hundred years had shone so brilliantly, was now almost extinct. A Protestant gentleman having died, his relative chose for his interment the place where the remains of the saintly Bishop had been deposited. Their astonishment was great when, on digging the grave, the sexton came upon the coffin of the holy prelate. Opening it, they found the body robed in episcopal ornaments, without the slightest sign of corruption,—as fresh and beautiful as the day on which it had

been interred. Surprised at the news of this wonder, the minister of the cathedral went in person to witness it. On examination it was found that the body emitted no disagreeable odor, and was perfectly entire. The minister, through a sentiment of respect, commanded the grave to be closed at once, and forbade anyone to touch what had been so wonderfully preserved. Seven years afterward the Regent, accompanied by thirteen schismatic bishops and a number of gentlemen of rank, went to the tomb of the holy man, and ordered it to be opened in their presence, that they might be personal witnesses of what had been recorded. When the grave was opened, the body was again found fresh and untouched by corruption, while from the countenance issued rays of light, which filled the beholders with astonishment, although their hearts still remained hardened, and they refused to accept the teachings of the true faith.

It is impossible at this late day to ascertain the history of the statue of Our Lady of Aberdeen. It is the constant tradition of our forefathers that from the middle of the eleventh century —that is, from the time when St. Margaret was Queen of Scotland—this image was held in great esteem, and that even then pilgrims came to offer up their prayers before it. During the terrible days of persecution, when the enemies of God and religion overran the country, desecrating the magnificent sanctuaries erected by our pious ancestors, their fury was especially directed against holy images. They tore down the pictures of God and His Saints which adorned the walls of the churches, and broke or burned the statues of the Immaculate Mother. But Our Lady of Aberdeen escaped their sacrilegious hands. Mary wished to show in a special manner how dear to her was this image, and historians tell us that it is the only one now in existence belonging to Scotland previous to the Reformation. The following is a brief account of how the Blessed Virgin preserved her favorite image from the profanation of the iconoclasts.

When the report reached Aberdeen that the followers of the apostate priest Knox were on their way to the city, some fervent Catholics took the holy image from its altar in the cathedral,

and concealed it in a spot where they thought no one would suspect it to be. Unfortunately, its hiding-place was discovered, and it fell into the hands of the heretics. Their rage at the sight of this image was beyond expression. More than once they endeavored to destroy it, but an invisible hand always protected the statue, and their impious design was frustrated. Some of the men, when on the point of raising the hammer to break it, were so overcome by a sentiment of involuntary respect that they left it untouched. Finally, one of them took it with him to his home, and here again Mary manifested her affection for this image by a twofold miracle.

The Calvinists, having discovered the house wherein the statue had been placed, entered it several times with the intention to destroy the image; but, although it had been put in one of the most conspicuous places in the house, they could not see it, and had to withdraw without carrying out their evil design.

The second miracle was the conversion of the man who had taken the statue under his protection. As in former times, when the Ark of the Covenant was sheltered in the house of Obededom, God showered down His blessings in abundance upon him and his family, so the Immaculate Virgin poured down upon this good man the blessings of Heaven. Penetrated with wonder at the miracles of which he had been an eye-witness, and touched by the grace of God, he and his family abjured the errors in which they had been brought up, and were received into the True Fold.

After his conversion this good man resolved to place the image of Our Lady, now doubly dear to him, under the care of some one who would be able to afford a more secure protection than he could give it. There happened to come to Aberdeen at that time a noble Scottish Catholic named William Laing, who was styled Procurator to the King of Spain. The convert entrusted his beloved image to William, who received it with sentiments of unfeigned devotion, and for a time succeeded in concealing it in his house. The fanatics, however, at length discovered its hiding-place, and once more determined to destroy it. But to prevent this William had it secretly con-

veyed on board a vessel belonging to the King of Spain, which happened to be in the Aberdeen harbor at the time. He gave orders to the captain, Antony Rochahague, to convey it to Flanders, and place it in the hands of the Archduchess (Infanta) Isabella, then governess of the Low Countries, whose devotion to the Queen of Heaven was known throughout Europe. This was in the year 1623 or 1625.

Here again Satan, who seemed full of wrath because his agents in Scotland had allowed the statue to escape destruction, made a last effort to destroy it. But how vain are his schemes against those who are under Mary's protection! Scarcely had the ship left the harbor when a terrible tempest arose, and the bark was tossed to and fro by the violence of the hurricane. The masts were thrown down and the sails destroyed, and when the tempest abated nothing was left but the hulk on the surface of the deep. A few hours later the ship encountered a pirate vessel from Holland, which rapidly advanced to seize her. Antony made a brave resistance, and, considering the disabled state of his ship, the victory he gained must be attributed to the protection of the Queen of Heaven, whose image was on board. When the piratical craft had been put to flight, a favorable wind and tide brought the other ship in sight of land, and in a short time the anchor was cast in the bay of Dunkirk.

When the Governor of that city saw a ship entering port without masts or sails, and was told that it contained the miraculous statue of Our Lady of Aberdeen, he was struck at the marvel, and a sudden thought entered his mind. He determined to take possession of the statue, and, after a time, send it as a present to the King of Spain. But Our Lady soon manifested her displeasure at this project, and sent him a dangerous illness, which brought him to the brink of the grave. This made him reflect on his conduct; he recognized his fault, and immediately countermanded the orders he had given for the seizure of the statue.

By a wonderful disposition of Providence, it happened that the Archduchess Isabella came to visit Dunkirk at that time. When the Governor heard of her arrival he sent at once for

Father de los Rios, her chaplain, and with tears in his eyes told him what he had done, of the malady with which he was afflicted in consequence, and begged him to go to the ship and receive the sacred image, and convey it to the Archduchess, to whom it had been sent. As soon as this had been done the sick man was restored to perfect health, to the wonder and admiration of all the people.

The Archduchess Isabella, full of gratitude to the Mother of God for this special manifestation of her affection toward her, received the sacred image with indescribable emotion. She gave order that it should be at once taken to Brussels, and placed in the chapel of her palace with great pomp. In the meantime, to secure an exact and authentic record of the various wonderful events she had heard related with reference to the statue, she charged William Laing to go to Scotland and collect all documents relating to its previous history, and to make strict and careful inquiry not only as to the honor and veneration which centuries of faith had rendered to the image in that country, but also concerning the miracles and favors granted to the people through the intervention of Our Lady of Aberdeen, that the glory of our Heavenly Mother might be handed down to all generations.

In 1626 Father de la Rios requested the Archduchess Isabella to permit the miraculous statue of Our Lady of Aberdeen to be transferred from the chapel of her palace in Brussels to the newly built church of the Augustinian Fathers, that it might be exposed once more to the public veneration of the faithful. To make reparation, as far as possible, for the outrages which the heretics of Scotland had offered to the Most Holy Virgin, the Archduchess ordered that the translation of the statue should be made with the greatest possible solemnity.

Sunday, May 3, Feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross, was the day appointed for the ceremony. The evening before, the bells of the city rang out a joyful peal for a whole hour, to announce to the inhabitants of the surrounding country the approach of the great festival. To induce the faithful to celebrate the occasion with all possible devotion, Urban VIII., who

then occupied the Chair of Peter, granted a plenary indulgence to all who, having communicated, would join in the procession of the sacred image. And James, Archbishop of Malines, to afford the clergy and people an opportunity of gaining this indulgence, issued a pastoral letter commanding the Holy Sacrifice to be offered up in all the churches of Brussels from an early hour.

At length the day dawned with unusual splendor, and was ushered in by the ringing of bells and the thunder of artillery. The new church of the Augustinians was beautifully decorated for the occasion. Magnificent tapestry ornamented the walls, the pillars were wreathed with garlands of evergreens and flowers, while the altars shone with a splendor rarely witnessed on earth. The pious princess, with her own hands, placed on the venerated statue a robe glittering with gold, precious stones, and her own most costly jewels.

All the clergy, nobility, and magistracy of the city were present, as well as the members of the different religious communities. The people, in holiday attire, flocked to the environs of the palace, and the crowd was so dense that it was only with the greatest difficulty the clergy reached the palace gates. The streets presented a gay appearance. Exquisite banners and oriflammes of every color floated in the breeze, and joy and happiness were depicted on the faces of the multitude.

At a given signal the procession moved forward. The pupils of the college conducted by the Augustinian Fathers came first, mounted on horses richly caparisoned; they bore aloft magnificent banners on which was embroidered the image of Mary. After them came the Cross, borne by one of the clergy, and accompanied with lights; then the various confraternities, religious orders, and collegiate bodies, marching in two lines, under their respective banners; these were followed by the clergy of the different parishes, in their most precious vestments, and by the canons of the cathedral in copes of cloth of gold. Then came an immense multitude of children clad in white, some of whom carried baskets of flowers with which they carpeted the streets, while others bore caskets of perfumes

which embalmed the air. Farther on, toward the end of the procession, in the midst of unparalleled magnificence, placed upon a portable altar borne by eight priests, appeared the statue of Our Lady of Aberdeen, crowned with flowers and glittering in the sunlight with dazzing brightness. Finally, under a splendid canopy borne by four of the Augustinian Fathers, walked the Archbishop of Malines, carrying the Blessed Sacrament. Immediately followed the Archduchess, accompanied by his Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Patras, Apostolic Nuncio of Belgium. At his side in grand military costume, walked the commander-in-chief of the Spanish army, Ambrose Spinola. The Archbishops of Cambrai and Cesaro, the court of Mansfield, the nobility and magistrates, closed the procession.

The streets through which the pious cortège passed were densely crowded, and the people looked on with religious awe, while hymns and sacred canticles filled the air. As the Blessed Sacrament appeared the crowds knelt down to adore, and even those who were least religious felt their souls filled with enthusiasm and respect.

When the procession entered the church the statue was placed on a magnificent altar prepared for it, and the Archbishop of Malines proceeded at once to offer up the Holy Sacrifice for the intentions of the Archduchess. The scene at that moment cannot well be described. The church all illuminated, the altars decorated with richest ornaments, the priests robed in vestments sparkling with gold, the statue of Our Lady surrounded with a halo of glory, the pealing of the bells, the swelling notes of the organ and lesser musical instruments,—all combined to remind one of the glory the angels and Saints render to God in Heaven. "On that day," says the historian, "Our Lord was adored in spirit and in truth; and the Virgin of virgins received the homage which her Divine Maternity merited, and which had been refused her in a city she once loved so well."

When the Holy Sacrifice was over the Augustinian Fathers went in a body to thank the Archduchess for her kindness, and

to assure her that they would not cease to pray for her before the holy image, that success might attend her in her temporal and spiritual enterprises, all of which, they knew, she undertook solely for the honor of God, the welfare of religion, and the good of her subjects. From that time the statue of Our Lady of Aberdeen began to be generally known as Our Lady of Good Success, on account of the many extraordinary favors the Blessed Virgin obtained for those who prayed before it.

That same day the illustrious Archduchess, in honor of the event, made generous offerings to the convents of the city, and distributed as alms in each parish one thousand loaves of bread and a large sum of money. When the poor people had partaken of her generosity their joy and gratitude knew no bounds; they hastened to the church to pour forth their prayers before Our Lady's image for their kind benefactress, and then repaired to the palace to offer to her the thanks of their devoted hearts.

In the evening a grand display of fireworks closed the proceedings of the day. But the gratitude of the people was not yet satisfied. For ten days the solemnity lasted, and during that time Archbishop Conruse, of Tuam, Ireland, and the Abbots of Grimberghen and Dillingen, with several other prelates, offered up the Holy Sacrifice at Our Lady's altar. Each day some distinguished preacher mounted the pulpit to proclaim, in glowing words to a devout multitude, the glories of the Immaculate Queen of Heaven. These honors given to Our Lady produced abundant fruit in the souls of the people, some of whom obtained an increase of faith and piety, while others found peace and joy for their souls wounded by sin.

The 12th of May brought this popular festival to an end. On that day the Holy Sacrifice was solemnly offered up by his Eminence Cardinal de la Cueva in presence of the nobility and the court. At the Gospel Father de la Rios, whose name as a preacher was known far and near, ascended the pulpit to speak once more of Our Lady's glory and her maternal love. The words he uttered went straight to the hearts of his audience, many of whom were moved to tears.

In the evening a magnificent procession again formed, when

the image of Our Lady of Aberdeen was borne in triumph through the city, and the mitred Abbot of Caudenberg, surrounded by the clergy and followed by the people, carried the Blessed Sacrament. When the procession returned to the church the organ and other musical instruments poured forth strains of joy; after which the Cardinal intoned the Te Deum in thanksgiving to God for the glory He had bestowed on His Most Holy Mother.

The Queen of Heaven did not delay long before testifying to these good people how pleased she was with the reception they had given her beloved image in its exile in a foreign land. The noble Lord Henry Meullmans, Abbot of Cundenberg, who carried the Blessed Sacrament at the closing procession, was one of the first to experience the power of Mary's intercession. For a long time this pious prelate suffered from a disease which the physicians declared to be incurable. But when the solemnity began, on the 3d of May, he prayed to Our Lady with great fervor that she would grant him a cure. On the octave day, as he went to the altar to say Mass, all at once he was delivered from the malady. After the Holy Sacrifice he told the people what had occurred, and asked them to join him in thanking his heavenly Benefactress. During the remainder of his life he consecrated himself especially to her service, and published on every side her great goodness and mercy.

But this was only the first of a countless number of favors which followed. People from all parts crowded to this hallowed sanctuary; some were bowed down under the weight of physical sufferings, and had come to solicit aid from the Health of the Weak; whilst there were others whose perverse dispositions had hitherto resisted every effort of grace,—men under the tyranny of pride, avarice, hatred, and ambition.

Among the favors obtained through the intercession of Our Lady of Aberdeen may be mentioned the cure of Catherine Raes, who had the misfortune, in a fall, to dislocate the cap of her knee. For months she suffered intense pain, and the surgeons were unable to afford any relief. Seeing that all human aid was useless, she had recourse to Heaven. A novena

to Our Lady of Aberdeen was begun, and on the third day, at the conclusion of a Mass offered for the invalid, she felt a sudden inspiration to rise. Without a moment's hesitation she, who had not been able to leave her bed since the accident, rose and began to walk about as if nothing were the matter, to the great surprise of her family and other persons who were present. This extraordinary cure was testified to by several of the clergy. The Archbishop of Malines ordered the circumstances to be investigated with the greatest care, and the witnesses to be rigorously examined; whereupon, finding their testimony strong and unanimous, he declared the fact to be miraculous.

In the year 1633 there lived in the town of Amiens a magistrate named Louis Clarisse. He was afflicted with a dangerous malady, and so great were his sufferings that it was thought his days on earth were numbered. Although the doctors had given him up, the poor man did not lose courage. It was about this time that the devotion to Our Lady of Aberdeen had reached Amiens. He immediately had recourse to the Blessed Virgin under this sweet title, and his prayer was heard. Not only did he improve at once, but he afterward enjoyed better health than ever before.

In the year 1695 Brussels had to sustain a siege; the battle raged with intense fury outside the city, and the shells were bursting in the streets and causing terrible destruction. All the houses around the church of the Augustinian Fathers were laid in ruins, while the sacred edifice itself remained untouched. The Fathers attributed this to the protection of Our Lady of Aberdeen, whose statue was in the church. Every year, on the anniversary of the event, they held a special solemnity in thanksgiving for their preservation.

One hundred years after Our Lady of Aberdeen landed on the shores of Belgium the faithful of Brussels celebrated a solemn festival with an octave. Nothing was spared to make the occasion a memorable one. Large crowds flocked to the church to honor the Immaculate Virgin, and their fervor and joy knew no bounds. A sodality in honor of Our Lady of Aberdeen was established, and people of every rank, from the

Archduchess Isabella, who governed the Netherlands, to the poorest beggar in the country, hastened to enroll their names, and to place themselves and all that were dear to them under the protection of the Queen of Heaven.

In the year 1796 the terrible Revolution which swept over France reached Brussels. The churches were pillaged and the relics of the Saints scattered to the winds. The fanatics broke to pieces sacred images, and put to death the priests of God who remained faithful. But Our Lady of Aberdeen here again took care of her beloved statue. In the midst of universal ruin it escaped uninjured. The Augustinian Fathers had to fly from their monastery, but before their departure they confided the image to a man named John Baptist Joseph Morris, who concealed it carefully for nine years. In 1805 Napoleon I., Emperor of the French, granted the Fathers permission to return, and once more the statue of Our Lady was exposed to the veneration of the faithful. Some years later, on April 7, 1814, it was solemnly transferred to the church of Finistère, not far distant, and was placed in a niche near St. Joseph's altar, where it remained till 1852. In that year a beautiful side chapel was built in honor of the Blessed Virgin, in which, on a magnificent altar of white marble, was placed the image of Our Lady of Aberdeen, where it may still be seen.

ST. MUNGO'S BELL*

Of old in a Scottish city,
As the ancient annals tell,
A peal for the souls departed
Used to sound from St. Mungo's Bell.

It tolled from the high church-steeple,
On the midnight air it fell;
It vied with the birds at Vesper,
And at dawn rang St. Mungo's Bell.

*Until the Reformation a famous bell was preserved at Glasgow. It was supposed to have been brought from Rome by St. Kentigern. Hence the popular appellation of St. Kentigern's or Mungo's Bell. It was tolled to invite the faithful to pray for the dead.

"Remember the dead; remember
Their pains all our woes excel;
Give comfort of dirge and soul Mass,—
Oh, pray!" said St. Mungo's Bell.

It startled the lonely watcher,
And the reveller knew full well,
As he paused in his course to listen,
What portended St. Mungo's Bell.

The nun in her cloister heard it,
And the monk in his quiet cell;
They prayed with a holy fervor
At sound of St. Mungo's Bell.

While the soldier at lone camp-fire,
As the night shades round him fell,
Half shudd'ring whispered an Ave—
So solemn, St. Mungo's Bell.

The knight and the mail-clad baron,
With a fear no mirth could dispel,
Heard voices of souls departed
In the tolling of Mungo's Bell.

The poor in their hovels drew nearer
To the world of the dead at the knell,
And the evil-doer trembled
At the warning of Mungo's Bell.

When the blight of the Reformation,
Like a cold and a cruel spell,
Seemed to sever this world from the other,
It silenced St. Mungo's Bell.

Through shadows of past generations
Let its brazen tongue still tell
The sorrows of souls departed,—
Let us heed the St. Mungo's Bell.

Anna T. Sadlier.

APPARITION

TO

ST. IGNATIUS DE LOYOLA, F.S.J.
MANRESA, SPAIN

1522

Beautiful Mother, we deck thy shrine,
All that is brightest and best of ours;
Found in our gardens, we reckon thine
God thought of thee when He made the flowers.
Rev. K. D. Beste.

N the summer of 1521 some Spanish soldiers were holding the unfinished citadel of Pamplona, against an invading army of the French. A cannon shot from the assailants dislodged a fragment of stone which wounded the left leg of a young Spanish officer, while the ball itself broke his other leg. He fell, and, as he had been the soul of the defence, the fortress fell with him. The conquerors honored the bravery of their gallant foe; they dressed his wounds, and carried him gently to his home not very far distant, and there set him free.

His name was Iñigo or Ignatius de Loyola, one of the sons of a nobleman of ancient family, whose old castle lay in the broad and beautiful valley from which the family surname was derived. Young Iñigo had been sent as page to King Ferdinand the Catholic, the first monarch of a united Spain. But the youth wearied of the soft life at court; he longed to be a soldier. His relative, the Duke of Najera, took him into his service and he won his spurs in actual war at the conquest of the town from which the Duke took his title. He was as true as he was brave, and universally popular. Though a man of the world, and fond of society, his lips were never sullied with a foul word, nor his life by a disgraceful deed. He was a poet,

too, in his own way, and sang the praises of St. Peter in a long epic.

The army surgeons had very unskilfully set his broken leg, and he had to go through such horrible operations that his life was despaired of. On the eve of SS. Peter and Paul he received the last Sacraments. But that very night St. Peter appeared to him, and he perfectly recovered his health. Still he was deformed and crippled; for not only was the leg that had been broken much shorter than its fellow, but the bone stood out with an unsightly lump. The fashionable hose of those days would reveal the deformity, and the young officer bade the surgeons, at the cost of any torture to himself, to reduce the disfigurement and to stretch the limb. He bore without flinching a very martyrdom of vanity. For an active mind like his the sick room was itself a torture; and to quiet his mind and to kill time, he asked for a novel of the period—some romance of knight-errantry. But books were rare in those days, and there were none of that kind in the Castle of Loyola. They brought him a Spanish translation of Ludolf of Saxony's Life of Christ, and a volume of the Lives of the Saints. For want of anything more to his taste, these he read and read again. Iñigo, with the spirit of a soldier who never flinched before any odds, said to himself: "What St. Francis did, and St. Dominic did, why cannot I do?" What most attracted his fearless soul were the self-inflicted penances of the Saints. This seemed to him the point which he ought most to try to imitate, and he only longed to gather strength and to leave his bed, in order that he might put in practice his stern resolve to leave house and home and all the world holds dear to lead a life of austerity and seclusion.

Those were days of tremendous issues for God's Church. The riches and the luxury of the time, the ferment of new ideas which the learning of the East and the invention of printing had produced, the newborn paganism and laxity of life, all had made the soil ready for a rank crop of evil within the Church, and even of revolt against her teaching. At this very time Luther, the apostate monk, had thrown aside the mask and

publicly burnt the Pope's Bull as a sign of open rebellion. In England and in France, as in Germany, error was lifting its head, and everything presaged a mighty moral convulsion, of which even the most foreseeing could not measure the results.

One night Iñigo, stirred by his longings for higher things, leapt from his bed; and, kneeling before a picture of Our Lady, dedicated himself in an ardent prayer to his Blessed Mother. A tremor as of an earthquake shook the castle, and split the solid walls with a rent, which can be seen even to this day. Hell seemed to have realized how great a recruit had been enrolled in God's army. Mary appeared to her servant with the Blessed Child in her arms, and accepted by her presence the offering thus made. Long before his strength had fully returned, Iñigo bade good-bye to his brother, who was then the head of the house. The lord of Loyola had half divined the purpose of Ignatius, and strove in every way to retain him. But he tore himself away under the pretext of being obliged to pay a visit of compliment to his relative, the Duke of Najera. No sooner had Iñigo fulfilled this duty, than he sent back his two attendants, and on his mule, for he was still very lame, he pushed right across the North of Spain to that great sanctuary of Our Lady which nestles under the crags and peaks of Montserrat. On his way he bound himself by a vow of chastity in honor of Our Lady. Shortly after he fell in with a Moorish gentleman, many of whom were still in Spain. The Mohammedan denied the virginity of Mary after the birth of Our Lord, and Iñigo strenuously upheld it. When the Mussulman had left him, it seemed to the converted cavalier that he had done wrong in letting the blasphemer go unpunished; and in doubt as to what he ought to do, he let his mule go its own way, ready to revenge the honor of his Lady if it should follow the Moor. However it turned off by another road, and Iñigo was saved from staining his hands with blood under a misguided impulse.

When our Saint had scaled the precipitous mountain, he made a most exact and general confession to one of the Benedictine monks, a saintly Frenchman. It was so broken with sobs and tears of contrition that it was not completed for three

days. Then, at nightfall, on the vigil of the Annunciation, he stripped himself of all his fine clothes, to his very shirt, and gave them all to a poor man, putting on a rough dress of sackcloth, which went down to his feet. In this his new armor, like the squires of those days before receiving knighthood, he spent the night at the statue of Our Lady, on his knees or leaning on his pilgrim's staff, within the old church. There, at Mary's Shrine, in the first light of dawn, he hung up his rapier and dagger—the badges of a gentleman in those days—and then approached Holy Communion.

Before day had fully broken over the huge spires of Montserrat, with one foot bare, but the other, still swollen and sore, in a rough sandal of esparto grass, such as the Spanish peasants wear to this day, he came down the rough mountain side. He had given his mule to the monastery. Some kind souls showed him the road to a shelter in the nearest town, and there, in the poor-house or hospice of St. Lucy in Manresa, he went to live among the poor of Jesus Christ. He made himself the poorest of the poor. Once so particular about his appearance, he now let his hair and nails grow, and tried to conceal under squalor and neglect all signs of his noble birth and breeding. He begged his food from door to door, and gave the best he got to the sick and hungry. His only food was bread and water; save that for his Sunday dinner he added a few herbs savored with ashes. The most fetid and loathsome of the sick were the object of his tenderest care, and no service was too revolting for him. Seven hours of his day were spent in prayer, without counting those which he gave to hearing Mass and attending the public services of the Church. But Ignatius, as he now began to be called, wished for a spot where his prayers and penances might be unobserved. He found it in a long narrow cavern in a defile not far off running down to the swift river Cardoner. Its entrance was hidden by a rich growth of thistles and thorns, while from a fissure in the rock he could look out on the jagged heights of Montserrat. There he was free to pass his time in prayer, there he could spend his days in absolute fast, there he could wield the scourge unseen or unheard, and

bind his waist with a cruel girdle of prickly leaves, still to be seen at Manresa. But there, too, in return, God communicated to him His choicest gifts. Within that cave was revealed to him that system of Christian perfection which is known by the name of the *Spiritual Exercises,* taught him by Our Blessed Lady and impressed on his soul by practical experience and fidelity to grace.

There is hardly a spot in that picturesque town which does not remind us of God's dealings with St. Ignatius, and of the heroic penance and profound humility which prepared him for the great work God destined for him.

There is the Cross of Tort, looking out over the bright river and rich valley, with Montserrat rising up dark and weird beyond. On his knees before this sacred sign the mysteries of the Catholic Faith were made known to St. Ignatius with such vividness, that in after life he used to say that even if those truths were to be made known to him in no other way, he was prepared to die a martyr's death for each doctrine of the Church from the knowledge of it he received in Manresa. There, too, is the Church of the Dominicans, such kind friends to the Saint, where the ineffable depths of the Blessed Trinity were opened to him, and where he was privileged to understand the mystery of the presence of Our Lord on the Altar. There in the adjoining convent, now, alas! a theatre, he was tenderly nursed by the good Fathers through a severe illness which was the result of his awful austerities and his still more terrible scruples. There again within the ruins of the hospice, covered by a fair chapel, is the spot where was his little room which looked out on the old Church of St. Lucy. This was the scene of the marvelous rapture, like to the sleep of death, lasting for a whole week and more, during which, in spite of the reserve under which Ignatius hid the favors of God, it seems certain that he saw the future of the Society which he was called to found.

Temptations of disgust at his squalid, hard, cruel life; temptations of vain-glory at the honor which his marvelous virtues began to win for him; doubts about the genuineness of his past

confessions—all these trials and many others gave him a practical insight into that mysterious warfare which is waged with more or less violence in every soul.

A year or so had now gone by since Ignatius came to Manresa. He had passed through a fiery probation, by which the old life was burned away, and the soul purified and free was ready to receive like molten metal a new form. The life of Our Lord had, by prayerful study and painstaking practice, become his life. It was time for work. Longings which had not yet taken perfect shape, the seeds of mighty works for God, were stirring in his soul. And so he left Manresa, and made his way alone, though many would have gladly borne him company, to the beautiful city of Barcelona, with its church towers rising from gardens of myrtles, and cedars, and orange groves, there to take ship for Civita Vecchia, and for the Holy Land. While waiting for a fair wind, a fortnight or so went by. Through a fierce storm, in the early spring, Loyola crossed the Mediterranean.

They were wild and lawless times for the weak and defenceless, but Ignatius, on landing at Gaeta, pushed forward to Rome and there he spent Holy Week and Easter week. On Low Sunday he was admitted to receive the blessing of that great and good Pope, the Belgian Adrian VI. Everyone told Ignatius that it was useless for a poor man to think of going to the Holy Land. The Crescent was everywhere victorious, and the brave knights of St. John had just been forced to yield up their fortress of Rhodes. But our Saint, who had learned for Christ's sake to love poverty and pain, went on to Venice, and even gave away what had been forced upon him to pay his passage. He begged his food by day and slept by night like a vagrant under the arcades in the great square of St. Mark. One of the Council of Ten, Mark Antony Trevisano, a Venetian nobleman, was wakened up at night by hearing words like these: "While you are sleeping in a soft bed, My servant is lying on the bare ground!" He got up at once, and went to look for this servant of God. He stumbled upon the sleeping stranger, and made him come to his palace. But Ignatius disliked its

luxury and splendor, and succeeded in obtaining a free passage on a Venetian man-of-war bound for Cyprus. So boldly did he reprove the bad life of some on board, that, but for a contrary wind, the sailors would have cast him away on some desert island. At Cyprus Ignatius found a pilgrim ship, and on the last day of August he landed at Jaffa. To be in Jerusalem was to him such a happiness that he would have stayed there all the rest of his life, if God, by means of the Provincial of the Franciscans, had not bade him leave.

Two months brought Ignatius back to Italy, and he set off from Venice poor as ever and on foot for Genoa.

Ignatius had at last efficiently completed his preparatory studies and, in the October of 1529, he entered the College of St. Barbara, which was close by his former College of Montaigu. He was given a room in an old turret, where he found a young Savoyard, Peter Favre, who had already taken his degree in Philosophy, and who, at the request of his professor Peña, undertook to help him in his course. His room was shared by a young professor, Francis Xavier, from the North of Spain, in the neighborhood of Loyola. He was of high family, very gifted in body and mind, but he cared little for the pious sayings and unworldly ways of Ignatius. However, constant acts of kindness, the power of example, the often repeated reminder, "What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world?" broke down the stubborn will of the young professor, whose dreams of earthly glory made way for an all-absorbing thirst for suffering and humiliation, in order to be like his Lord. Two other Spanish students, who had known St. Ignatius at Alcalá, James Lainez and Alphonsus Salmeron, followed him to Paris, and soon renewed their acquaintance with him. A Portuguese, on the endowment of St. Barbara, Simon Rodriguez, and the Spaniard Nicholas Bobadilla, who was attending the lectures of Xavier at the College of Beauvais, were joined to this close circle of friends.

One story must be told out of many of what Ignatius did for souls. A young man was carrying on a criminal intrigue, and our Saint knew that on his way the sinner used to cross a bridge

over a branch of the lake of Gentilly. It was a bitter night, and Ignatius stood up to his neck in the icy water, and there awaited his coming. "Go," cried the Saint, as the youth passed by, "I will do penance here every evening till you amend." The sight touched the sinner's heart, and he turned home a penitent.

Ignatius finished his philosophy in 1534, when he took his degree of Master of Arts. He began at once his theological studies at the great Dominican College close by. Meantime he saw the hour had come to give some permanent shape to his work, and so to prevent the new band of followers from drifting away under any storm of difficulty that might arise. Five of the six companions had made the *Exercises* with extraordinary fervor under Ignatius, which Xavier's duties as professor alone had debarred him from doing; and to each our Saint commended his rules for the choice of a state of life. To none but Favre had he revealed his own design of going to work for God in the Holy Land. He invited each separately and under promise of secrecy to make up his mind by a certain time, and on that day to come to him with his decision. To their surprise, the six friends when they met found that they were all of one mind, ready to go with St. Ignatius to the end in close following of Christ, their King and Captain.

Their resolve was to bind themselves by vow to perpetual poverty and chastity, and to visit the Holy Land; and if, as had happened to St. Ignatius, they could not remain there, or were even prevented from going, they would put themselves entirely at the disposal of the Pope.

In the beginning of January, 1537, after a journey full of hardships, through hostile armies, through the snows and frost of the Alps, and through countries and towns full of hostile Protestants, the companions whom he had left in Paris came to forget all their sorrows in being once more with their father Ignatius. To him and to them it was an additional pleasure to see their little band increased by two fresh recruits from Paris, and others from Venice. The hospitals were their home, and the scene of their marvelous devotion and victory over self in

the service of the sick and poor. When Lent arrived, St. Ignatius sent them all to Rome to spend the Holy Week there, and to get the Pope's blessing and the leave from him to receive Orders and to preach and hear confessions. He did not dare to go himself, for he feared to meet Dr. Ortiz, who was then at Rome as one of the agents of Charles V., pleading the cause of our brave Queen, Catherine of Aragon. Ortiz proved the very best friend of the pilgrims, for he presented them to the Pope, Paul III., who sent them back with all and more than they had dared to ask or hope for. On the Feast of St. John the Baptist, St. Ignatius and those of his companions who were not priests, were ordained priests at Venice, and then one and all retired into solitude to prepare for their Apostolic work, and wherein the newly anointed might make ready for their first Mass. St. Ignatius, B. Peter Favre and Father Lainez took up their abode in a ruined monastery outside the walls of Vicenza. There were neither doors nor windows-frames in the building, and their food was the hard, dry crusts which they begged. But the forty days in that desert were turned into Paradise by the glimpses of heavenly things which made all suffering forgotten. That period over, the Fathers went out into the streets of Vicenza to preach and to instruct, and though they knew but little Italian, their zeal, the sight of their wearied and wasted forms, and the power of their holiness wrought wonders among the people.

All the companions then gathered together at Vicenza; and there it was agreed that, as the way to the Holy Land was indefinitely closed by the war between the Catholic powers and the Turk, they should offer their services to the Pope. Accordingly, St. Ignatius, with B. Peter Favre and Lainez went on to Rome, to put themselves and their brethren entirely at the disposal of the Pope. As they drew near the city, close by the site of ancient Veii, in the broad Campagna which spreads around the capital of the Christian world, there is a wayside chapel at a place called La Storta. As St. Ignatius had journeyed along, the two Fathers who were with him had said Mass, and the Saint had approached Holy Communion each day. His heart

was full of thoughts of love towards his Sacramental Lord. He entered the chapel to pray, and when he came out, it was evident that he had been deeply stirred. "I know not," he said, "what awaits us in Rome. Perhaps we shall be crucified there." In fact, as he went on to tell, Jesus had appeared to him bearing His Cross, and the Eternal Father had commended Ignatius to the care of His Blessed Son with these words, "Receive this man as Thy servant." Then Our Lord had turned to him and said, "I will be favorable to you in Rome."

It was during the Lent of 1537 that St. Ignatius arrived there with his two companions. Those whom he had left behind were busy gathering in the harvest of the souls in various cities of Italy, nor could St. Ignatius remain idle in face of so much to be done. Pope Paul III. received him and his companions with the greatest kindness. He appointed FF. Lainez and Favre as lecturers in the Roman university, while he left Ignatius free to exercise his zeal.

By the Easter of 1538 God's time had come for laying broad and deep the Constitutions of the new Order, and St. Ignatius in his wise humility summoned around him all his brethren, to aid him by their prayers and counsel in this most important work. By the orders of the Vicar of the Pope, Cardinal Carafa, the pulpits of various churches were assigned to them, and marvelous was the change wrought by their burning discourses and bright example.

But none had the power of St. Ignatius' words, simple and straightforward, without adornment, a soldier's speech, but irresistible because the expression of deepest conviction and the fruit of perpetual prayer. He preached in his native tongue in the Spanish Church of Our Lady of Montserrat, hard by the English hospice, which is now the venerable English College. So engrossed were these Apostolic men with their work, that it sometimes happened that night came upon them before they had had time to remember that they had not yet broken their fast.

But a sudden tempest arose. One of the many whom the moral corruption of the time and the widespread attacks against

the faith had led astray, an Augustinian Friar from Piedmont, had come to preach in Rome, under the patronage of persons of high rank. The followers of St. Ignatius soon detected that his sermons contained, under a careful disguise, the errors of Calvin and Luther. They began at once to treat in their instructions, without any allusion to the preacher, upon various points on which the Piedmontese Friar was leading the people astray. His defence was to retort upon St. Ignatius the accusation of heresy, and openly to assert that, over and over again, our Saint had been convicted of false doctrine. His assertions were supported by a group of men who came primed with false evidence. The accusations were destructive of all prospect of future good, and St. Ignatius, so willing to court contempt and ignominy when only himself was concerned, boldly demanded a public enquiry and a sentence in the public courts. God took the matter in hand; the four ecclesiastical judges before whom he had been tried were all, for one reason or other, in Rome just at that very time, and their evidence was conclusive. An attempt was made to hush up the affair in order to shelter some persons high placed, who would have been compromised by an official sentence. But St. Ignatius was convinced that an authoritative recognition of his innocence and freedom from error was absolutely necessary to prevent the old accusation from continually reappearing. He went to the Pope, then at his country house at Frascati, and boldly laid the whole matter before him. A full and judicial sentence was published in due form in his favor. The Friar escaped to Geneva, and there openly professed Lutheranism.

On Christmas night that same year, 1538, in the subterranean chapel of the Basilica of St. Mary Major, where the relic of the Holy Crib of Bethlehem was kept, St. Ignatius said his first Mass. He had not thought a year and a half too long a preparation!

Now that peace had been restored, it was time to settle definitely the form and shape of the Order. Ignatius recommended the others to seek in prayer and penance and at the Holy Sacrifice the light they required; and there is still existing a sort

of diary in which he used to note down the thoughts vouchsafed to himself at that time in prayer. There are, too, at Rome the minutes drawn up and signed by the Fathers during their careful and prolonged deliberations. Not to interrupt their labor for souls, they only met at night-fall, and then discussed at length the various subjects which were before them.

The resolutions of the Fathers were laid before Paul III. on September 3, 1539, by the fast friend of St. Ignatius, the great Cardinal Contarini, who was also the friend of our Cardinal Pole. The Pope gladly gave a general approval. But St.Ignatius was desirous of a still more explicit recognition. The scheme was handed over to a commission of three Cardinals, of whom one especially was strongly opposed to the approbation of any fresh religious order in the church. But the prayers and penances of our Saint won the day, and even Cardinal Guidiccioni, who had been most determined, owned that some irresistible impulse forced him to give a consent against his own wishes. Paul III. read over the scheme himself with great attention, and exclaimed on doing so: "The finger of God is here!" On the 27th of September, a Bull of the Pontiff set the seal of Christ's Vicar on the work of St. Ignatius.

Already B. Peter Favre had been sent as the counsellor of Ortiz to the conference on religion at Worms, while at the suggestion of Gouvea, the old rector of St. Barbara's, John III. of Portugal, had asked and obtained St. Francis Xavier and F. Rodriguez as missionaries for India. Four of the other Fathers had been called away to labor in various parts of Italy. It was absolutely necessary, before they were scattered over the world, at once to elect a superior. The four were recalled to Rome, and in the Lent of 1541 they were all gathered into the narrow and poverty-stricken house beside the little Church of Santa Maria della Strada, which had been given to them. Three days were spent in prayer; no discussion was allowed; the result was to come from God. On the day fixed the votes of those present and of those who were absent were opened, and all, save the vote of the Saint himself, fell on Ignatius. He declared most positively that the sins of his present and past life

totally unfitted him for such a post; and, in spite of the protest of his brethren to the contrary, insisted that a new election should take place, after four days of fresh prayer and consideration. The second voting had the same result. Ignatius refused as absolutely as before; no persuasion could change his mind, till at length, as a compromise, he volunteered to lay bare all his defects and crimes to his confessor, a Franciscan Father, and abide by his decision. He never doubted what the result would be.

Accordingly, he spent the last three days of Holy Week in the Franciscan house of St. Peter in Montorio, the traditional scene of St. Peter's crucifixion, which looks down from the Janiculan hill upon the domes and bell-towers of Rome. Ignatius spent the time in earnest effort to paint his own character in the blackest colors and so to prove his utter unworthiness for the office of General; and then on Easter day he went triumphantly to his father confessor to hear his verdict. "By your refusal you are acting against the Holy Ghost," was the Friar's only reply. Even then Ignatius begged him to reconsider his opinion, and when he had done so to write his answer to the Fathers. Then and then only did St. Ignatius bow his head and, in accepting the painful burden of superior, his life henceforward was merged in the sorrows and successes of the Society.

On the Friday in Easter week St. Ignatius and his companions went on that touching pilgrimage, trodden by so many millions of Catholics, to the Seven Churches of Rome. It brought them at length to the solemn Basilica of St. Paul, so stately in its solitude, with its forest of marble pillars and its glittering mosaics. There at the altar of the Blessed Sacrament, before a picture of Our Lady and Child, then at the left of the venerable high altar, St. Ignatius said Mass, and at the Communion, with the paten in one hand and the formula of vows in the other, he made his solemn profession, sealing it with the reception of his King and Captain, and the five other Fathers then followed his example. After Mass, they went to visit each of the privileged altars of the basilica, and then

meeting round the high altar, which is still standing, they gave each other the kiss of peace, their hearts full of gratitude that it had been given them to fulfil publicly and in face of the world at the Shrine of the Apostle of the Gentiles, what had been begun in the secret vault of Montmartre.

The remaining sixteen years of his life were chequered with many clouds of trouble, cheered though they were by the steady progress of the Society in unwearied struggles with vice and with error. Ignatius himself never left Rome, save on two occasions, when he went as peacemaker to Tivoli, and once to a castle of the Colonnas in the territory of Naples. But he followed with the deepest interest the labors of St. Francis Xavier in India and Japan, of B. Peter Favre and his other Fathers in Italy, Germany, the Low Countries, in Savoy, in Spain, Portugal and elsewhere, cheering them with frequent letters. B. Peter he welcomed home when at length, after eight years' absence and hardship, obedience brought him back to Rome to die in his arms. St. Francis Borja, Viceroy of Catalonia, and Duke of Gandia, left his state and broad lands to fill the void caused by Favre's death. St. Ignatius made every son of his, however distant, in India or in Brazil, feel the warm beatings of a Father's heart in those wonderful letters which tell better than anything its tenderness, its courage, its strength, and when needs be, its sternness.

To far off Japan, to mysterious Abyssinia, to Ireland torn by heresy and faction, to Scotland tottering to its ruin, to the Congo, opened out long before the days of modern travel by the children of Ignatius, the General from his little room at Santa Maria della Strada, sent his brave sons on the message of peace. To England he would have sent them if his zeal had not been baffled by politicians. Then as ever his children had to suffer even from Catholic hands and in Catholic countries, and every sorrow of theirs found its echo in his soul, so jealous for the glory of God, and so sensitive to their sufferings, so indifferent to his own.

The walls of his humble rooms still exist, their holiness is still respected, and they could tell that the source and spring

of all he did was his constant union with God, a prayer which found its food in every creature of the Creator. For each flower, each star, each beautiful object in creation lifted his heart up to Heaven. He loved to step out at night on a balcony, which has been preserved, and to gaze upon the calm stillness of a southern starlit sky, as if lifting his eyes longingly towards his home, and he would sigh and say "How vile the earth is when we look at Heaven!" So constant grew this his habit of looking upwards that he was known familiarly to passers-by as the man whose eyes were ever heavenward. Such was his devotion at office that his tears flowed in such streams that there was peril of his losing his sight; and it was at length found necessary to obtain for him a dispensation from the Pope and a prohibition to say his breviary. At Mass his devotion got the better of him so completely that he often spent an hour at the altar, and was forced to celebrate in private, while the saying of two Masses on Christmas night threw him into a fever.

St. Ignatius was naturally very fond of the chants and services of the Church, but he sacrificed this pleasure and departed so far from the practice of former days as to lay no obligation of choir on his Order. He felt the absolute need of devoting all its time to the active work of teaching, of preaching and administering the Sacraments, and he would leave to others that sublime duty of echoing on earth the perpetual service of the blessed before the Throne. Still he valued at its full the Liturgy, and when the ceremonies of Holy Week were to be gone through in his church, he was so anxious that they should be done as well as possible, that he used to send for those who were to take part in them, and make them rehearse them several times in his presence.

Much as the Saint valued prayer, much as he sought in it the light and grace which he needed for himself, and which he asked for others, yet he ever taught by his own practice how necessary it was to join to it self-conquest; for otherwise, as he remarked, persons given to prayer easily become too wedded to their own ideas. His constant prayer was "Grant me, O

God, humility and loving reverence." His lowly opinion of himself was shown, not only in his first refusal of the office of General, but in his effort to resign the post, even long before his health had so far incapacitated him that pity for his feebleness forced his children to accept the resignation. His plea was that it was easy to find one who would fill the post better or less ill than he. He ever feared that others should take him for anything more than he was. His confessor had hinted that if he outlived the Saint he would have marvels to disclose. The Saint gave him a severe public penance; and when the Father died before his penitent, his friends suspected that this was in answer to the prayer of St. Ignatius.

The holiness of our Saint stood the test of the Apostle's saying, for never did he offend by the tongue. He was most careful not to exaggerate or to use superlatives, so common in southern speech. Never did he say a word against another nor use a harsh word of reproach, nor did he allow himself to express an unfavorable judgment of anyone. He always preferred to get those who were in fault to acknowledge their error, so the more successfully to be able to correct them. What was perhaps most notable in him was the complete control which he had obtained over his naturally fiery temper. He was sweet and gentle, when sweetness and gentleness were needed, and yet could at the right time speak with such severity as to make the offender tremble before him, though the next moment he would return to his usual calm. He adjusted this severity to a nicety, according to the virtue of the person with whom he had to deal, and while considerate and gentle with the weak, he might have appeared hard and exacting to a fault when dealing with men of tried virtue, like Lainez.

A proof of St. Ignatius' wise foresight and of his blindness, when needs be, to thoughtless faults, was best seen in his long suffering the freaks of the boy novice Ribadeneira, whose grateful pen was afterwards to give us the charming biography of the Saint. In one of his fits of juvenile waywardness the youth showed the power which Ignatius could exert over hearts, by walking all the way from Louvain to Rome in the midst of

a cruel winter to seek comfort in his troubles in the sight of his friend and father. The sick had a special place in the heart of St. Ignatius. When he had ordered some extra comforts for the invalids and the bursar told him there was not money in the house even to buy food for the community, he bade him sell some of the very small supply of crockery and furniture which the house then possessed and get the delicacies for the sick.

His hidden life is told us in the more than human wisdom of his *Exercises,* of which it was ever the outward expression. Therein we can read the maxims which he carried out in every detail of his life. The secret of his success, the source of the courage which supported him are to be found in his quiet trust in God. Yet he fully recognized how God demands that man should do his part. However, stiff and decided he might be in carrying out his resolves when once he saw it was God's wish, his action was wisely slow, and he studied carefully and chose the best times and the seasons. At all other times he anxiously sought and readily followed the opinion of others.

He had also a Saint's discernment when to lay aside human prudence and cast his care on God. His hands were already well filled with pious works, beyond and above his care of the Society, and yet he undertook the whole responsibility of the refuge for fallen women at St. Martha, and braved the scoffs and vile insinuations of the wicked, and the worldly-wise criticisms of the good. No labor was too great, he urged, to prevent one single mortal sin, or to promote God's glory in any way; and once, when that was at stake, he stayed fourteen hours waiting without food for an audience at a great man's door.

The reward came at last. Ignatius was now sixty-five. He was constantly prostrated by illness. Age had not bent his upright form, nor blanched his hair, his face was winning and full of a noble dignity. Yet the responsibilities of his world-wide work, and the heats of a more than unusually hot Roman summer brought on a fever. But it did not seem serious. On the last day but one of July, 1556, he suggested to his Vicar

that it was time to go and beg for him the Papal blessing, as he was near his end. Neither the doctors nor the Fathers could believe this, and so the message was delayed, even the last Sacraments were not administered. Next morning was Friday, and at early dawn St. Ignatius was found actually dying, and before the holy oils could be brought, about an hour after sunrise, he expired with the words, "Jesus, Jesus" on his lips.

In 1622 Gregory XV. canonized our Saint. His relics lie in a sumptuous chapel, within the Church of the Gesu which was built in the place of Santa Maria della Strada.

YE ANGELS, NOW BE GLAD

Ye angels, now be glad,
And thou exult O earth!
Loyola's happy shade
Rejoice at thy Saint's birth.

Loyola's son, all hail,
By angels crowned above,
Ignatius, father dear,
Accept thy children's love.

On Pampeluna's walls
The leader of the band,
Behold our youthful Saint
Defends his native land.

Stretched on a bed of pain
Christ's holy life he reads,
While for his mis-spent youth
His heart now sorely bleeds.

"Begone, Oh sinful world,
I'll never serve thee more,"
He cries, "I'll bear the Cross
Which Jesus for me bore."

Manresa's sacred grot
Beholds him prostrate lie,
Communing with his God,
And hears his fervent cry.

At Peter's sainted throne,
Behold its champion kneels,
The sword of truth resolved
In its defence to wield.

A champion of peace
On many a well-fought field,
His victories left no stain
On his untarnished shield.

His conflicts now are passed,
His mission here is done,
With Saints he reigns above,
And Heaven's forever won.

APPARITION TO
B. DOMINICA, V.O.S.D.
FLORENCE, ITALY

APPARITION
TO
B. DOMINICA, V.O.S.D.
FLORENCE, ITALY
1525

We beg for pardon, and we know 'tis granted,
We see in Thy Face, oh, Babe Divine,
Thy Mother's gentle voice has pleaded for us,
Redeemed once more we leave Thy sacred shrine.

G. O. M.

N a village near Florence there lived a young girl, the daughter of poor parents, named Dominica. From her childhood she honored the Holy Virgin, fasted with that intention every day in the week, and on Saturdays distributed amongst the poor the food of which she had deprived herself. She placed the flowers of her garden before the image of Mary, who, from her earliest youth, loaded her with the most signal favors. At the age of ten years, being one day at the window, she saw in the street a beautiful woman, holding by the hand a child whose feet and breast were wounded. "Who has wounded that child?" asked Dominica. "Love," replied the mother. Dominica, charmed with the beauty of the child, asked him if his wounds were painful. He made no answer, but the mother said: "Tell me, my daughter, what induced you to crown those images with flowers?" "My love for Jesus and for Mary," replied the girl. On the instant the Holy Virgin appeared under the form of a great Queen, surrounded by light: the Child shone like a sun. He took those same flowers and laid them on the head of Dominica, who, recognizing in these august personages, Jesus and Mary, had prostrated herself before them. Thus ended the Vision. Dominica subsequently took the habit of St. Dominic, and died in the odor of sanctity in the year 1552.

—*From Year of Mary.*

A STORY OF ITALY

Where the silver waves of Arno past the towers of Florence flow,—
Where in verdant fields of Florence, scarlet lilies bud and blow,—
Dwelt a poor and saintly maiden, full three hundred years ago.

For the love of Mary Mother, she had fasted every day,
To the poor of Blessed Mary she had given the food away,
And on Mary's joyous Saturdays had gathered garlands gay.

Then, where Mary Mother's Image made her dwelling always bright,
Clasping close the dear Child Jesus all the day and all the night,
She had laid the brilliant garlands as an offering in their sight.

One day, looking forth, beheld she a woman wondrous fair,
With her, waiting in the street, a little child was there;
Both stretched forth beseeching hands, as asking food and care.

But behold! when food she brought them, needed they no opened door,
In the room they stood beside her. Lo, on hands and feet He bore;—
That fair Child who noiseless entered—deep, dread wounds that pierced them sore.

Then she spoke unto the woman: "Who could wound this little child?"
"Love it was," the woman answered, and her voice was sweet and mild;
"Doth it hurt thee?" asked the maiden. He for answer only smiled.

Wounds on tender hands; ah, pity! wounds on tender tiny feet,
On the young Child's breast a deep wound where the gentle heart doth beat,—
Yea, but from the awful wound-prints comes a fragrance passing sweet.

"Is this ointment? what can buy it?" "Faith and works," the mother said,
Humbly then the maiden offered unto child and mother bread,
But it was by love for Jesus that the little Child was fed.

Even the word itself refreshed Him, all His face with gladness shone,
Quoth He: "Love Him, love Him ever. That shall lead thee safely on,
Teach thee how to serve Him truly, till thou stand before His throne."

Sweeter, sweeter came the fragrance from the wounds so dread to see,
"O my God!" exclaimed the maiden, "what can Heaven's fragrance be,
Since the odor in my dwelling makes me die of love to Thee!"

And then radiant, changed and glorious, robed in garments of a queen,
All enshrined in brilliant brightness was that wondrous woman seen;
And the little Child, resplendent as the sun in Heaven His mien.

Jesus, Mary, stood before her. Down upon her knees she fell,
Ah! the rapture of that vision, who may think and who can tell?
Needs saint's pen for saintly story, and what saint could write it well.

Like that holy little maiden, low upon my knees I lie,
Unto Jesus and to Mary with an aching heart I cry:
Hungry, thirsty, faint and weary, feed me, feed me, lest I die.

Banish from me earthly riches, take all earthly love from me,
Love Divine is all I ask for in my shame and misery;
I will never cease to ask it till the Face of God I see.

What doth feed Thee, Child of Mary, make my own and only food!
Though He slay me, make me love Him, Mary, Mother of my God;
By thy Mother-heart I ask it, and by His Most Precious Blood.

Child whose Sacred Heart was riven, Child whose hands and feet have bled!
Give me deep, sincere repentance wherewith Thou art comforted;
Then by my love let me feed Thee: by Thy love let me be fed.

Susan L. Emery.

OUR LADY OF ITALY

Longfellow makes Prince Henry in the Golden Legend soliloquize as he and Elsie come into Italy:

> "This is, indeed, the Blessed Mary's land
> Virgin and Mother of our dear Redeemer."

Yet we must not claim too much even for lovely Italy. Spain is also "the land of the most holy Mary." In the vision of Catharine Laboure, the rays from the outstretched hands of the Blessed Mother of God fell most abundantly on her native France. Even in England of to-day, it is easy to find from her ancient churches and the customs and traditions which linger among her people, a reason for her olden title, "Our Lady's Dower."

The humblest woman or child in Italy understands Our Lady's place in the Church as well as the theologian. Look at yonder young peasant mother, with the cruel grief in her tearful dark eyes; listen to her as she lifts imploring hands and sways back and forth in the passion of her prayer, seeking the intercession of her dear Madonna for a sick child or a wayward husband at some favored Shrine: "Help me; you can do it, you understand my need, because you are a woman and a mother."

To the Italian, "the dear Redeemer" is always the Son of His Mother, alike on Calvary as in Bethlehem; and to their logical minds he who praises the Son, be it ever so fervently, and disparages the Mother, is not a good Christian.

In Rome alone nearly one hundred churches are dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, from the Basilica of St. Mary Major's in the Esquiline, one of the four patriarchal basilicas, to the little circular chapel of Our Lady of the Sun in the Velabrum, supposed to be an old-time Temple of Vesta.

St. Mary Major's is a very ancient church, dating from the reign of Pope Liberius, A. D. 352. The story of its origin is the vision of John the Patrician and his wife, the chosen site covered with snow in summer, in memory of which miracle the Church keeps the feast of Santa Maria ad Nives—Our Lady of the Snow—on August 5, when rose-leaves fall through the dome of St. Mary Major's during Mass, in token of that wondrous snowfall of old.

In this church is the Borghese Chapel, the largest and most magnificent family chapel in the world, whose decorations are an exposition of the Catholic teaching in regard to Our Lady conceived Immaculate, Mother of Christ, ever Virgin. One of the Madonnas, attributed to St. Luke, is above the altar. The four great prophets, leading with Isaiah, who foretold the Virgin Mother, are in the pendatives of the dome. Aaron and David, her priestly and her kingly ancestors; St. Joseph, her spouse, and St. John the Evangelist, her adopted son, are commemorated in statues; St. Luke, who gives the sufficient foundation of all Catholic devotion to her in the first chapter

of his Gospel, is the subject of a large fresco. The Doctors of the Church who wrote best of her, the spiritual and military conquerors in her name, the defenders of her Immaculate Conception, her poets, and the women-saints who, like her, were wedded virgins, are all depicted in this chapel.

The forest of white pillars in the nave of the Basilica, the first American gold in its ceiling, speak eloquently in fact and symbolism in Our Lady's honor. Yet St. Mary Major's in its vastness and whiteness, oppressed and dazzled me. Much more appealing and devotional was Santa Maria in Trastevere —titular church of His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons—which, for the mosaics in the sanctuary and some other points of family resemblance, I called a little sister of St. John Lateran's.

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